

# Annual Report

## 2019/2020

(28th March 2019 – 27th March 2020)



# A Snapshot: 28th March 2019 – 27th March 2020

No. of teachers registered  
with the Teaching Council



# 105,933

## 90,630

renewed  
their  
registration  
online



No. of times  
'Search the Register' was used

# 157,010



## 5,007 teachers

engaged  
in *Droichead*



# 34,924

teachers were vetted  
through e-vetting system

[www.teachingcouncil.ie](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie)

# 1,976,863 VISITORS



## 28 Ezines



## 4

research  
webinars

# 53

Fitness to teach  
complaints  
were made to the  
Teaching Council

# Chairperson's Report



**Seán McMahon**

*Chairperson of the Teaching Council*

Is mór an onóir dom bheith tofa mar Chathaoirleach mar thoradh ar thoghcháin mhí an Mhárta 2020 chun na Comhairle. Gabhaim buíochas leis an gCathaoirleach atá ag dul as oifig, Noelle Moran, Uasal, as ucht a cuid ionchuir den scoth i rith a tréimhse oifige. Táim ag súil go mór le leanúint ar aghaidh leis an obair seo in éineacht le gach comhalta den Chomhairle, agus ag an am céanna fáilte a chur roimh na comhaltaí nua atá tofa. Chomh maith leis sin, cuirim mo bhuíochas in iúl do na comhaltaí atá ag dul as oifig as ucht a ndíograise agus a dtiomantais agus guím gach rath ar gach duine díobh amach anseo.

The Teaching Council has driven and overseen considerable progress across a wide range of objectives and actions under our strategic priorities and statutory role throughout the past year, as detailed in the wider body of this report.

The work of the Council is focused on the profession of teaching, the promotion, oversight and continuance of best practice and the sharing of knowledge, innovation, learning and insights in teaching and education. This is intended for the long-term benefit and standing of the profession and also for the benefit of the pupils, students and entire school communities who are at the centre of everything we seek to accomplish. Teachers are the lynchpin within this equation, and we acknowledge their diligence and dedication throughout the past year and most particularly during the current Covid-19 national emergency.

Teachers have educated the children of Ireland from generation to generation, building upon and contributing to the collective intellect and progress of our nation on a continuous and evolving basis. It is this essential, formative and holistic focus within young people's lives that supports their ongoing and future attainment including their personal achievement, accomplishment and wellbeing through lifelong learning and active participation in community and society.

In an age where value systems globally have come under pressure, the constant of a high quality education is the bedrock on which all societies continue to function successfully. The high standards of teaching that we have and promote throughout the profession in Ireland continues to play a fundamental role in this imperative.

The Council, during the 2019/2020 period, engaged with the Department of Education regarding the need for regulations to be consented to and assigned by the Minister under section 37 of the Teaching Council Acts and published as a Statutory Instrument. Regulations under section 37 of the Act will oblige employers to notify the Teaching Council when a teacher is dismissed or has resigned following a complaint or a disciplinary process at school level.

The Council has continued to impress on the Department of Education the critical need to implement Section 28 of the Education Act. Once implemented, this will ensure that complaints which are capable of being resolved at local level can be processed within a statutory framework, rather than such complaints coming directly to the Teaching Council.

Every day, teachers educate our children, young people and adult learners while engaging in constant learning themselves. The sharing of these teaching experiences and insights is exemplified in many ways by the Council's flagship annual Festival of Education in Learning and Teaching Excellence (FÉILTE), which took place at NUI Galway in October 2019. Attended by over 700 teachers, this event included multiple presentations, discussions, showcases and workshops which were a testament to the innovation that is happening in teaching and learning across the country. The event highlighted many important ongoing initiatives where teachers are driving momentum within and from their school communities. This regularly happens within the context of collaboration with other schools/teachers and often on a scalable basis with regional and national potential.

The Teaching Council is intent on supporting the progress and wellbeing of vibrant school communities throughout Ireland. Through the BEACONS process (Bringing Education Alive for our Communities On a National Scale), we are engaging and encouraging a diverse group of stakeholders in new ways of facilitating more and better conversations between teachers, parents and students at local community level. BEACONS aims to enhance engagement between local communities and national consultative processes on issues of common interest and importance. In this regard, I am delighted to record that BEACONS was one of 18 projects recognised by the inaugural Public Service Innovation Fund in 2019, led by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. Together with Council, I look forward to the further evolution and contribution of this process in the years ahead.

Ireland has been gripped by the Covid-19 pandemic. The emergency closure of schools on 12 March 2020 created massive uncertainty and anxiety for the profession and its stakeholders including parents, families and most particularly for pupils and students. The school experience is a fundamentally important and deeply valued element of life and living in Ireland. On behalf of the Teaching Council, I express our appreciation to teachers nationwide for the manner in which they have risen to this unprecedented challenge. We particularly wish to acknowledge their contribution in regard to the reopening of schools and to the ongoing disruptive effects of the pandemic.

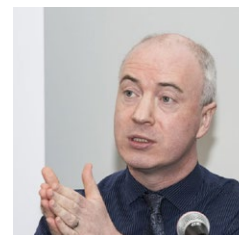
The Teaching Council greatly values interacting with teachers and all stakeholders in education. We welcome participation in our events in tandem with ongoing dialogue and discussion. Since the emergence of Covid-19 a considerable volume of activity has continued online and we wish to acknowledge the excellent participation levels, which are of great credit to everyone concerned.

On behalf of the Teaching Council, I wish to thank teachers for their dedication and professionalism in these difficult times. I wish to thank the Members, Director, Management and Staff of the Council for their commitment and contribution. I wish all good health as we travel through these challenging pandemic times. Building on achievements to date, may we all collectively look forward to continuing progress and success with renewed optimism for the future



**Seán McMahon**  
Chairperson

# Director's Report



**Tomás Ó Ruairc**  
*Director of the Teaching Council*

Fáilte chuig Tuarascáil Bhliantúil na Comhairle Múinteoireachta don tréimhse 2019-2020 a léiríonn an dul chun cinn sa bhreis atá déanta i sainchúram na Comhairle mar an comhlacht reachtúil chun na caighdeáin ghairmiúla sa teagasc a chur chun cinn agus a rialáil, go príomha leis an gcur i bhfeidhm leanúnach dár bplean straitéiseach 2018-2020.

Teachers fulfil a very special and important role in our society, nurturing the intellect and potential of our young people and thereby underpinning the ambitions of our country through the endeavours and achievements of a fundamentally well-educated population. The Council's role is to support this critically important contribution through proactive engagement and ongoing consultation with the teaching profession and all other stakeholders in the education system.

A newly reconstituted Council commenced their term in April 2020, following from the election of teacher members. In June 2020, Mr. Seán McMahon was elected Chairperson and Ms. Noelle Moran was elected Deputy Chairperson. I look forward to working with Mr. McMahon, Ms. Moran and all Council members in further progressing the work of the Council over their current new term of office and I express my thanks to outgoing Council members.

During the period under review, the Council delivered a broad programme of operations, activities and initiatives in line with key strategic goals across Teacher Education, Teacher Supply, Professional Practice, Initial Teacher Education, Fitness to Teach, Corporate Governance and Communications. As of 27 March, 2020, a total of 105,933 teachers were registered with the Teaching Council including 5,538 new registrants and 2,900 graduates, which was in line with expectations, including renewal registrants.

Across all of our programmes of engagement with the profession, we are continuing to streamline processes in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness across our entire service delivery including the optimum use of online systems and digital technology. This includes streamlining the vetting application process for teachers for initial registration, registration renewal and employment purposes.

As a considerable volume of registered teachers had originally completed vetting using a paper based format between 2006 and 2016, we evolved our services in conjunction with An Garda Síochána's National Vetting Unit to provide e-vetting and I am pleased to report that this is now a common standard for all registered teachers, providing further efficiency in this process.

The Council's Registration Database replacement project continued throughout the 2019/2020 annual report year. The current registration database system will be replaced with a newly upgraded system in early 2021 which will further enhance registration processes including their convenience for teachers. We are continuing to place a strong emphasis on online service delivery across all of our activities.

The Council has a statutory responsibility for maintaining and enhancing the quality of teaching in Ireland by promoting and ensuring high standards in the profession, including promotion of the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers and the investigation of complaints received. For the period March 2019 – March 2020, 53 complaints were received and considered by the Council's Fitness to Teach/Investigating Committee. The Teaching Council also actively engages with relevant stakeholders in relation to its statutory functions including other regulatory authorities.

We continued our work in the review and accreditation of programmes of Initial Teacher Education including extensive consultation with stakeholders and partners. The Council's integrated induction framework for newly qualified teachers, Droichead, entered the fourth year of its growth phase, during which we implemented a further cycle of our Quality Assurance review process. This provided positive feedback relating to the effectiveness and consistency of the Droichead process and the supportive framework it provides both for newly qualified teachers and their schools.

Working with the Department of Education and all stakeholders, the Council continues to support initiatives to increase the supply of teachers both for primary and post-primary sectors. Under the Teacher Supply Action Plan, the Council is represented on the Department's Steering Group, Implementation Group and working groups including Data, Higher Education and Communications.

We continued to prioritise the development of initiatives designed to support the profession through research and knowledge sharing. These included the Council's CROÍ (collaboration and research for ongoing innovation) research series, the John Coolahan Research Framework and the commissioning of research under our DEEPEN (Droichead: Exploring and Eliciting Perspectives, Experiences and Narratives) project. DEEPEN is designed to gain further insights into the experiences of teachers within the Droichead professional induction framework. We also commenced a scoping exercise for a proposed longitudinal research project into the professional journeys of teachers over the first 10 years.

In collaboration with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and the Centre for Effective Services, the Council co-funds and is represented on the Teachers' Research Exchange (T-REX) Steering Committee where this online exchange shares the latest insights from research in teaching practice. These initiatives are augmented through our regular research ezines and online library of resources. The research programmes are being progressed in consultation with the Council's Research Engagement Group including registered teachers and others with and interest in and experience of research in the areas of teaching, learning and assessment.

The activities I have mentioned, and all other aspects of our work are covered in greater detail in the following pages of our report. As we concluded the period under review, Ireland was entering into unknown territory in respect of the global pandemic, which has since unfolded with severe and detrimental impacts across every sector of society and the economy, and has particularly impacted the delivery of education and the essential role of teachers in our communities and for our young people.

I wish to pay the strongest possible tribute to teachers and school management for their exceptional response to the crisis, then and now, and to everyone who has risen to this unprecedented challenge throughout Ireland. I thank the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Members of Council and my management team and all staff for their unstinting dedication and contribution and for their support and encouragement of the essential work of the Council.

We will continue to make further progress in line with our remit to support the excellence of the teaching profession in Ireland to the maximum of our capability, today, tomorrow and into the future.



**Tomás Ó Ruairc**  
Director

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# 1 About the Teaching Council

The Teaching Council was established on a statutory basis in March 2006. The Teaching Council is the professional standards body for the teaching profession, which promotes and regulates professional standards in teaching. It acts in the interests of the public good while upholding and enhancing standards in the teaching profession.

## Membership of the Teaching Council

The Council has 37 members and 16 of these are registered teachers who are elected by teachers. The membership comprises of:

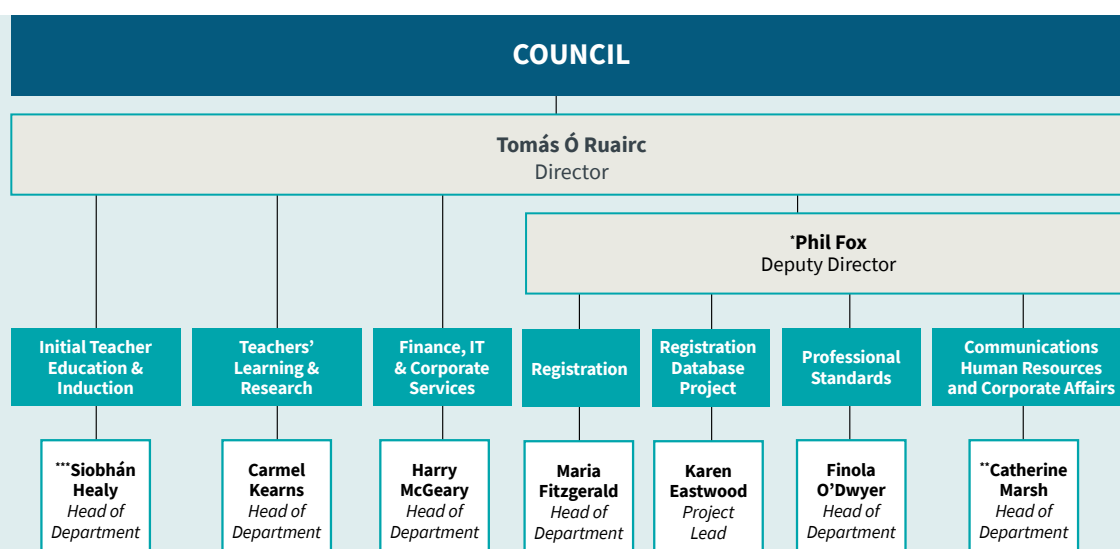
- 11 primary teachers, nine of whom are elected and two of whom are teacher union nominees
- 11 post-primary teachers, seven of whom are elected and four of whom are teacher union nominees
- two nominated by colleges of education
- two nominated by specified third-level bodies
- four nominated by school management (two primary and two post-primary)
- two nominated by parents' associations (one primary and one post-primary) and
- five nominated by the Minister for Education, including one representing each of IBEC and ICTU.

In accordance with the Election Regulations, the Council appointed Mr. Brendan O'Dea to be the Election 2020 returning officer at its meeting on 1 July 2019. The Teaching Council held an election of teacher members to the Council in March 2020. There are 16 elected teacher member positions on the Council. The Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015 determines that nine are from the primary category and seven from the post-primary category. The election was undertaken using an online voting system. This is the second outing for online voting and, as was the case in Election 2016, it proved effective and efficient. The online ballot was open from 24 February 2020 to 11 March 2020 for registered teachers to cast their votes. The total electorate in the contested constituencies was 90,797 of whom 18,000 voted.

The new nominees were elected in March 2020 and the names forwarded to the Minister for Education for appointment to the Council. Further details on the membership of the Teaching Council can be found in Appendix 2.

## Senior management team

During the reporting year the Teaching Council was supported in its work by an executive of 54 staff.



\* Brendan O'Dea was in this position until Phil Fox was appointed Deputy Director in July 2019.

\*\* Catherine Marsh was appointed Head of Communications, Human Resources and Corporate Affairs in February 2020.

\*\*\* Phil Fox was in this position. Siobhan Healy was appointed Head of Initial Teacher Education and Induction in September 2019



## 2 Achieving strategic objectives

### Strategic Plan 2018-2020

The Teaching Council made considerable progress during the reporting year developing the 2018-2020 Strategic Plan goals.

### The seven strategic goals for 2018-2020 are:

1

#### Consolidate and communicate progress made towards a seamless continuum of Teacher Education

- Droichead, the Council's integrated induction framework for newly qualified teachers, entered the fourth year of its growth phase during the reporting year. The Council continue to engage actively with the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT) as they support the professional learning of teachers undertaking the Droichead process and the training of the Professional Support Teams within the schools.
- A stakeholder event took place in September 2019 as part of the DEEPEN (Droichead: Exploring and Eliciting Perspectives, Experiences and Narratives) research project. During the reporting year, work continued on developing the survey instruments, and these were piloted in February 2020.
- Worked continued on planning for a longitudinal research project exploring the professional journey of new teachers in Ireland. As part of that process, an initial market sounding exercise was completed in May 2019.
- The Council worked closely with the Department of Education to arrange an event for support services aimed at facilitating the alignment of support services' work programmes and Cosán the national framework for teachers' learning.
- Council staff facilitated ten workshops in Education Centres during the reporting year. A professional development programme then took place in October 2019 to support 12 practising teachers in facilitating additional Cosán workshops for schools in Education Centres. These workshops were developed in association with Education Support Centres Ireland (ESCI) and 12 of these workshops were facilitated in six Education Centres.
- The Council worked with a number of stakeholders to support them in embedding Cosán into existing learning opportunities.

## 2

### Work with the Department of Education and stakeholders to agree a model and process for ensuring a better match between teacher supply and demand

- The Council is represented on the Teacher Supply Steering Group, the Implementation Group and on three of the four established working groups, namely the Data, Higher Education and Communications Working Groups.
- The Communications Working Group, which is chaired by the Director, has been consulting with student teachers, teachers, parents, principals and national stakeholders in line with the Teacher Supply Action Plan. Preparations are ongoing for the next round of focus groups.
- The Council worked with the careers offices in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) nationwide and in Northern Ireland, attending total of 37 events including teacher recruitment fairs, open days, career fairs and presentations to promote pathways to teaching. The Department of Education's Teaching Transforms webpage was signposted at each of these events.
- The Council and the Department of Education met with guidance organisations to seek ways to better promote pathways to teaching. These organisations included the Association of Higher Education Careers Services (AHECS), National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE) and the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC).
- As part of the Data Working Group the Council worked in consultation with the Department of Education in the preparation of the Teacher Demand and Supply in Ireland 2020 – 2036: A Technical Report. This report, published in November 2019, provides the basis for further progress towards the development of a sustainable and flexible model of managing teachers supply and demand.
- In line with Action 12 of the Teacher Supply Action plan (2018), the Higher Education Authority (HEA) engaged with the ITE programme providers regarding the provision of additional four-year concurrent post-primary ITE programmes in 2019/20 which qualify teachers in two subject areas, including targeted subjects. The Teaching Council appointed and convened review panels to review eight concurrent post-primary programmes in these targeted subject areas in the reporting period.
- The School Placement Working Group (SPWG) was convened by the Council in November 2018 to review the implementation of school placement guidelines and the recommendations of Teaching Council commissioned research on school placement. The group met four times during the reporting year and finalised its report and action plan in December 2019. The report was considered by Council in December and sent for consideration to the Department of Education.

### 3

#### **Support teachers in enhancing their professional practice through professional learning frameworks which facilitate a culture of shared learning**

- The Council worked closely with the Department of Education to arrange an event for support services aimed at facilitating the alignment of support services' work programmes and Cosán the national framework for teachers' learning.
- Council staff facilitated ten workshops in Education Centres during the reporting year. A professional development programme then took place in October 2019 to support 12 practising teachers in facilitating additional Cosán Workshops for schools in Education Centres. These workshops were developed in association with Education Support Centres Ireland (ESCI) and 12 of these workshops were facilitated in six Education Centres.
- The Council worked with a number of education stakeholders to support them in embedding Cosán into existing learning opportunities.
- Applications were invited for the third round of the John Coolahan Research Support Framework in May 2019. Some 37 applications were received and considered by the appointed review panel. An awards event took place in December 2019, at which 24 projects involving 87 researchers were awarded funding. Collaboration and shared learning are emphasised in the framework, and 16 of the successful applications involved collaborations between two or more teachers, or between teachers and other educational researchers.

### 4

#### **Continue to safeguard entry to the profession through high standards for initial teacher education, as well as effective and efficient review and registration processes**

- Ongoing review of registration processes resulted in the increased provision of online processes for teachers. This included the introduction of email submission of documentation in relation to registration with conditions and registration renewals.
- The mainstreaming of re-vetting commenced in January 2020. This will ensure that all registered teachers will be re-vetted on a three-year cycle.
- The Teaching Council (Registration) Regulations were reviewed and redrafting commenced in advance of going to consultation.
- Work on the review of the Council's standards for programmes of ITE continued. Following on from Phase 1 and 2 of the review process completed in 2018 and 2019, revised standards for ITE were drafted, drawing on feedback received during these phases, relevant literature, strategy and policy documents. A comprehensive consultation process was commenced in September 2019, during which key stakeholders and partners were invited to discuss and offer feedback on draft iterations of the document "Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education". A series of 12 consultation sessions were held between September 2019 and February 2020.
- Following a wide-ranging and comprehensive consultation process conducted between June 2018 and April 2019, the Council's review of the Curricular Subject Requirements at post-primary level was finalised during the reporting year. A revised set of post-primary curricular subject requirements, including requirements for the new curricular subjects of Computer Science and Politics and Society, was approved by the Council in October 2019 and subsequently sent to the Department for its considered views.

## 5

### Ensure that the implementation of the Fitness to Teach process is robust, fair and transparent for teachers and the wider public

- The 53 complaints received in relation to registered teachers were processed in line with the Council's Investigating Committee Procedures and, where appropriate, the Disciplinary Committee Rules of Procedure which are set down in a Statutory Instrument. In this regard, during the reporting year the Professional Standards section of the Council continued to review and refine Investigating Committee and Disciplinary Committee processes.
- The Council continued to engage with the Department of Education seeking the early implementation of procedures under section 28 of the Education Act 1998, to provide for a statutory grievance procedure for parents and teachers at school level.
- Engagement also continued with the Department regarding Ministerial approval of regulations, pursuant to Section 37 of the Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015. Such regulations would place a statutory obligation on employers to notify the Council when a registered teacher is dismissed or resigns on foot of a disciplinary-related matter.
- The Council successfully defended an appeal by a teacher to the Court of Appeal. The appeal related to a decision of the High Court that the Teaching Council was entitled to notify the National Vetting Bureau that it had a bona fide concern that a teacher, the subject of an inquiry, may harm a child or vulnerable person.
- At the end of the reporting period, draft Social Media Guidance was ready for approval by Council following an extensive consultation process.



## 6

### Promote the teaching profession, including wellbeing, and enhance awareness of the Council's work through innovative and accessible communication

- FÉILTE 2019 took place on 27 and 28 September in National University of Ireland Galway with over 750 attendees from 22 countries represented and 1,895 views of the event via livestreaming.
- Approximately 37 events were attended to promote pathways to teaching. These included teacher recruitment fairs, open days, career fairs and presentations targeting diverse audiences.
- 28 ezines were issued, including two video ezines, and five webinars were hosted.
- Twitter followers increased by over 3,059 to a total of 30,600.
- Facebook followers increased by over 1,149 to 7,458.
- As part of the Council's CROÍ (Collaboration and Research for Ongoing Innovation) programme, four webinars were hosted, some which included joint collaborations:
  - April 2019: Curricular Reform in conjunction with National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)
  - May 2019: The John Coolahan Research Support Framework webinar
  - October 2019: Digital Technology in Our Schools in conjunction with the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST)
  - November 2019: Exploring Perspectives on Assessment with the Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).
- The Council produced six research ezines which covered areas such as Curriculum, Digital Technology, Assessment, Inclusion, the John Coolahan Research Support Framework and a special edition ezine to mark World Book Day.
- The BEACONS process which stands for Bringing Education Alive for our Communities On a National Scale was established in early 2019. This innovative process of facilitated conversations, led at the community level, brings all voices together to support more and better conversations between stakeholders in education. An event sees students, parents, teachers, principals and other stakeholders engage in short conversations on matters that are of importance to them. A total of six events have taken place in the communities of:
 

Ennistymon, Co. Clare	- May and November 2019
Baltinglass, Co. Wicklow	- November 2019
North East Inner City Dublin	- November 2019
Sharing Learning Day, Teaching Council Offices	- December 2019
Ennis, Co. Clare (Focus on Inclusive Education)	- February 2020

## 7

**Ensure that the Teaching Council has sufficient resources, including from other sources to support efficient ways of working, compliance with corporate governance and development of effective policies**

- The Council's low risk investment portfolio withstood volatile market conditions towards the end of the reporting year and is well placed to provide satisfactory returns.
- The ICT infrastructure was further developed to facilitate secure remote working and business continuity.
- The onsite managed services function continued to provide frontline administration and call handling services during a year of increased volumes.
- A lengthy procurement process was completed for the Registration Database project and a successful vendor approved by Council in December 2019. The implementation of the project commenced in January 2020 with design and discovery workshops.
- Following the lockdown on 12 March 2020, the project team successfully transitioned to virtual workshops to allow the implementation stage of the project to continue.







### 3 The Register of Teachers

The Teaching Council is responsible for the registration of members of the teaching profession. This involves establishing and maintaining the Register of Teachers, setting standards for entry to the Register, and assessing applications for entry to the Register.

#### Registrations

A total of 105,933 teachers were registered with the Teaching Council on 27 March 2020. Overall there were 5,538 new registrants entered onto the Register, including 2,900 new graduates who completed/updated their registrations during the summer registration period.

Route of Registration	Number
Primary	49,407
Post-Primary	45,410
Further Education	13,872
Other	1,243

**Note:** Teachers may be registered under more than one route.

Over this 12 month period, 215 teachers lapsed from the Register for not addressing their conditions, of which 16 subsequently re-registered. A total of 1,345 teachers lapsed for non-payment of renewal fee, with 56 teachers re-registering. Of the teachers requested to complete re-vetting, 203 teachers were removed for non-compliance and none returned to the Register. A further 231 teachers voluntarily removed themselves from the Register during this timeframe.

The Registration Committee met on 6 occasions over this period. The Registration Review Group met on five occasions and considered 28 cases. As in previous years and consistent with the teaching profession in other countries, approximately 77% of registered teachers are female and 23% are male.



## Registration Renewals

Since January 2014, registration with the Council is a requirement for a teacher to receive a State-funded salary. Registration lasts for one year and teachers must renew their registration each year in order to remain on the Register of Teachers. The registration renewal fee remains at €65 and income tax relief can be claimed. **During the year, 90,630 teachers renewed their registration with 91% selecting the online payment option.**

## Registration with Conditions

Teachers are registered with conditions when they have not met all of the Council's requirements at initial registration. The conditions applied to a teacher's registration, and the methods and timelines for addressing these conditions, are outlined to the teacher when they register. Generally, teachers are given three years to address the conditions of their registration and extensions can be sought in exceptional circumstances. Among the most common conditions attached to registration are induction, qualification shortfall and Irish language requirement.

Newly qualified teachers (NQTs) who register with the Council are required to complete a period of professional induction. The Droichead process is an integrated induction which is aimed at supporting NQTs as they commence their teaching career. The Council commenced the full administration of the Droichead professional induction process in September 2017. Since then, there has been a significant increase in the number of newly qualified teachers participating in the induction process. During the 2019 summer months, a total of 1,845 completed the 2018/2019 Droichead process. This process aligns with the academic year but overlaps two reporting years. Beginning in September 2019, a total of 3,162 teachers commenced the Droichead process.

During the reporting year a total of 2,285 teachers with registration conditions outstanding were contacted three months before their expiry dates. Of these, 1,846 teachers requested and were granted extensions of time. Throughout this period a range of conditions were removed from 6,151 teachers' registrations as they had been fulfilled.

The Registration Panel carries out the assessment of extension requests on behalf of the Council. The Panel met on six occasions and considered 36 cases. A further 1,200 cases were presented to the Panel for ratification.

## PME Verification Project

The Council supports student teachers undertaking a Professional Masters in Education (PME) in post-primary, to verify that their undergraduate subjects meet the Council's requirements for teaching at least one post-primary subject, in advance of applying for registration. This verification checks that the subject taken at undergraduate level meets the requirements as set down by the Council for registration with that subject.

This confirms the PME student teacher's eligibility to register with the Council on completion of their Masters studies and also helps speed up the registration process. A total of 82% of the PME student teachers (post-primary) availed of this free process.

## Accessing information on the Register

The Register of Teachers is available to the public for inspection through an online "Search the Register" facility on the Council's website. This facility was used 157,010 times during the year.

## Garda Vetting

The Council administers the vetting of teachers for initial registration, registration renewal and employment purposes. During the reporting year, a total of 34,924 teachers were vetted by the Council. Of these, 7,149 teachers were vetted for initial registration or employment purposes; 25,419 were vetted as part of the re-vetting of registered teachers and 2,356 were vetted following the commencement of mainstream re-vetting.

The re-vetting project focused on updating vetting for all registered teachers who had been vetted between 2006 and 2016 when it was a paper-based system under the Garda Central Vetting Unit. This process was completed in January 2020 ensuring that e-vetting via the National Vetting Bureau (NVB) was the common standard for all registered teachers. Since 2016 all teachers on the Register have either applied for vetting or updated their vetting. Commencing in February 2020 the Council decided to introduce the re-vetting of all teachers on a three-year cyclical basis commencing in February 2020. This involved asking teachers who were previously vetted in 2016/2017 to reapply for vetting. However, due to the outbreak of Covid-19 and the Government measures put in place to combat the spread of Covid-19, this project was temporarily suspended in March 2020. This resulted in the re-vetting of some teachers being deferred for a year and their existing vetting disclosures remaining valid.

The outcome of the vetting process is known as a Disclosure. As part of the registration process, the Council is required to consider vetting disclosures, for suitability of the individual as a 'fit and proper person' for registration or registration renewal purposes. The Evidence of Character Panel, on behalf of the Council, carry out such assessments.

During the reporting year the Evidence of Character Panel met on 12 occasions and considered 43 vetting disclosures in respect of applicants for registration or renewal of registration. A further 398 cases were presented for ratification to the panel during the year. The Panel was provided with an update on 27 teachers who had been approved for registration/re-registration with conditions as previously imposed by the Panel.

# 4 Enhancing standards of professional conduct and practice

**The Teaching Council is responsible for maintaining and enhancing the quality of teaching in Ireland by promoting and ensuring high standards in the profession. This is achieved through the publication and promotion of a Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers, and the investigation of complaints.**

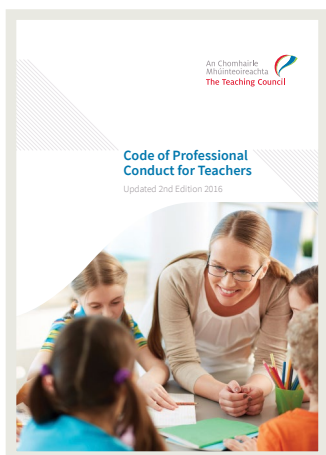


The second edition of the Code of Professional Conduct (updated in 2016) sets out the standards of professional knowledge, skill, competence and conduct that are expected of registered teachers. The Code is a statement of what good teaching should look and feel like. It is a statutory document that acts as a reference point during Fitness to Teach inquiries.

The Council's Fitness to Teach functions (Part 5 of the Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015) were commenced on 25 July 2016. The Council can investigate complaints made against registered teachers on serious matters. Once a complaint is made, the Council will initiate an investigation and decide if it should be dealt with through the Council's formal disciplinary procedures.

The Council may, following a disciplinary hearing, decide to advise, admonish or censure the teacher in writing, impose conditions on the teacher's registration, or suspend or remove the teacher from the Register of Teachers. Where a teacher is suspended or removed from the Register, they are not eligible to be paid a State-funded salary.

The Council advises that complaints should in the first instance be brought to the teacher's school before they are brought to the Teaching Council. However, where a child or vulnerable person is at risk, this should be brought to the attention of An Garda Síochána and Tusla - The Child and Family Agency. The implementation of procedures under section 28 of the Education Act 1998 would provide for a formalised complaints procedure at school level, allowing grievances or complaints to be dealt with without recourse to Fitness to Teach procedures. In this regard, the Council continued to engage with the Minister and Department of Education in relation to the need to implement procedures under section 28 of the Education Act 1998, whether this is by means of procedures under the recently published Bill regarding the Parent and Student Charter or by whatever means the Minister sees fit.



The Code is a statement of what good teaching should look and feel like.

The Teaching Council also continued to engage with the Department of Education regarding the need for regulations to be consented to and signed by the Minister under section 37 of the Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015 and published as a Statutory Instrument. Regulations under section 37 of the Act will oblige employers to notify the Teaching Council when a teacher is dismissed or has resigned following a complaint or a disciplinary process at school level.

### **Investigation of Fitness to Teach Complaints/Investigating Committee**

At the start of the reporting year, 24 complaints were live before the Investigating Committee having been carried forward from previous reporting periods. A further 53 complaints were received during the current reporting year, 28 March 2019 to 27 March 2020.

52 of the complaints related to individual teachers and one complaint was made which related to two teachers, totalling 54 teachers. Of the 52 complaints, three teachers had more than one complaint submitted in relation to them.

Eight of the 53 complaints were refused at Director's review stage as they did not meet the requirements of the Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015, i.e. they were not signed or accompanied by relevant documentation and information.

### **Analysis of teachers complained of – route of registration**

Of the 54 teachers complained about in the reporting year, 22 were teachers in post-primary, 28 were teachers in primary and four were teachers in further education.

### **Grounds of complaint**

The Council can look into complaints on a number of grounds as set out in Part 5 of the Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015, which include:

- > professional misconduct
- > poor professional performance
- > engaging in conduct contrary to the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers
- > being medically unfit to teach
- > a court conviction for certain offences
- > failing to comply with, or contravening a provision of the Teaching Council Acts, 2001-2015; the Education Act, 1998; the Education Welfare Act, 2000; the Education and Training Boards Act, 2013, and any regulations, rules or orders made under those Acts
- > failing to comply with an undertaking or to take any action specified in a consent given to a panel of the Council's Disciplinary Committee at an inquiry and
- > erroneous registration due to a false or fraudulent declaration or misrepresentation.

## Decisions of the Investigating Committee

The Investigating Committee is a screening committee that considers and investigates complaints received by the Teaching Council in relation to registered teachers. This Committee must decide whether action is required or whether all or part of a complaint should be referred to the Disciplinary Committee for an inquiry.

- The Investigating Committee decided that it could not consider 12 of the 53 complaints received. These complaints were refused as they did not meet the requirements of the Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015, i.e. the conduct occurred prior to 25 July 2016 and the Investigating Committee did not have jurisdiction to consider same, they did not relate to the registered teacher's fitness to teach, or school-based procedures had not been concluded before the matter was raised with the Investigating Committee
- Following a decision to investigate, the Committee refused to refer six of the 53 complaints received, to the Disciplinary Committee
- The Investigating Committee considered zero withdrawals of a complaint during the reporting year
- Of the 53 complaints, 27 required further consideration by the Investigating Committee as at 27 March 2020 and
- Four of the 53 complaints related to conduct that occurred prior to the commencement of Part 5.

## Source of complaint

Complaint Group	Amount
Parents	38
The Teaching Council via the Executive Committee, the complaint having come to the attention of the Council through the media or otherwise	7
Other parties	8
School management authorities	0

## Categories of Complaint

The following illustrates the categories of complaint recorded and the numbers of complaints received in each category during the reporting year:

Conduct/behaviour*	36
Competence/performance/practice	15
Medical concerns	1
Criminal convictions	2
Dishonesty/professional integrity	2
A teacher's failure to report/notify	7
Breach of Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers	5
Breach of the Specified Acts listed at section 42(1)(a) of the Teaching Council (Amendment) Act 2015	0

*Note: More than one category of complaint can be attached to any individual complaint. Therefore, the grounds of complaint in the table above will not necessarily amount to the total number of complaints received during the reporting year.*

\* Complaints related to conduct/behaviour include physical abuse/assault, verbal assault, sexual/intimate contact with a student, inappropriate personal relationship with a student (non-sexual), inappropriate communications (of a sexual and non-sexual nature), bullying, discriminatory behaviour and inappropriate social media usage.

## Fitness to Teach Inquiries/Disciplinary Committee

Fitness to Teach commenced on 25 July 2016 and from that date, the Teaching Council can receive and investigate complaints in relation to registered teachers, which can ultimately result in an inquiry into a teacher's fitness to teach.

The Investigating Committee of the Council may refer a complaint to the Disciplinary Committee for inquiry. In most cases, an inquiry will take the form of an oral hearing before a panel of the Disciplinary Committee.

It is similar to a hearing before a court or tribunal. Witnesses give evidence under oath, however, the panel may, at the request of, or with the consent of, the teacher who is the subject of the complaint, decide to hold an inquiry by an examination of documents and written submissions, rather than conduct the inquiry in the form of an oral hearing. One such inquiry took place during the reporting year.

In most cases, an oral hearing will take place, especially where facts are disputed or are at issue. Where the inquiry is held in public, members of the media can attend.

If applications are made to it, the inquiry panel may decide to hold all or part of an inquiry in private. The panel can also decide to anonymise the identity of people and locations connected to the inquiry if an inquiry proceeds in public.

Five matters were referred to the Disciplinary Committee for inquiry in the 2019/2020 reporting year. Preparations were underway in four of these matters and it was anticipated that inquiries would take place in the following reporting period.

In the fifth matter an oral inquiry was held in public during the reporting period with the Inquiry Panel making findings and imposing a sanction of removal from the Register. In accordance with section 44(5) of the Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015, the Council applied to the High Court for confirmation of this sanction and the decision of the Court was awaited at the end of the reporting year.

One matter which was referred to the Disciplinary Committee during the reporting period 2018/2019, was concluded in the form of an inquiry by examination of documents and written submissions during the current reporting period. In this instance, the Inquiry Panel made findings and decided on a sanction, namely that the teacher should be retained on the Register subject to Fitness to Teach conditions. Confirmation of this sanction by the High Court was awaited at the end the reporting year.

During the reporting year, a decision of the High Court in February 2019, against a registered teacher who challenged a decision of Council to make a notification to the National Vetting Bureau regarding a bona fide concern of a child protection nature, was appealed to the Court of Appeal. The Court of Appeal dismissed the appeal in July 2019, awarding costs to the Teaching Council.

During the reporting year, the Teaching Council approved a policy setting out the periods for which notices under section 46B of the Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015 would be retained on the Teaching Council website. These notices relate to findings made by inquiry panels and sanctions applied and confirmed by the High Court (where appropriate).

In accordance with Statutory Instrument S. I. No 8 of 2017 European Union (Recognition of Professional Qualifications) Regulations 2017, the Teaching Council, as a Competent Authority under EU Directive 2013/55/EU, is obliged to notify the competent authorities in all other EU Member States, where the practise of a registered person is prohibited or restricted by a national authority or court. During the reporting year, The Teaching Council issued alerts in relation to three registered teachers.

## Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is a statutory committee of Council, which performs functions conferred on it by the Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015; this includes matters which Council may delegate to it. The Council has delegated its functions under section 47 and under section 42(1) of the Act to the Executive Committee, pursuant to section 26(i) of the Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015.

Section 47 of the Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015 provides that the Council, if it is satisfied that it is in the public interest, may apply to the High Court for an Order to suspend the registration of a registered teacher for a specified period. The Executive Committee considered three such applications in the reporting year and in two of these cases decided to make an application. One of these applications was granted by the High Court, while the second was withdrawn by the Council following the successful appeal of a criminal conviction by the registered teacher.

Section 42(1) of the Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015 provides that the Council may make a complaint to the Investigating Committee. This can arise where a registered teacher comes to the Council's attention via the media or where a member of the public or a board of management notify Council of a concern relating to a registered teacher but do not wish to become a formal complainant. The Executive Committee (having been delegated this function by Council), decided that Council should become the complainant with regard to seven complaints during the reporting year.



## **Stakeholder engagement regarding fitness to teach matters**

The Council actively engages with stakeholders on a regular basis.

In the reporting year, bilateral meetings were held with regard to Fitness to Teach matters between the Professional Standards staff who support the Fitness to Teach functions of Council and key stakeholders.

Council continued to support stakeholders in terms of providing briefings and information sessions in the context of Fitness to Teach.

A wider stakeholder engagement to convey the Council's learnings to date around complaints and inquiries took place on 5 April 2019. At this engagement draft Social Media Guidelines were also introduced to stakeholders in advance of a wide-reaching consultation process.

At the end of the reporting period, the final draft, now titled Social Media 'Guidance' was ready for Council approval.

Engagement took place with the Department of Education, Tusla, An Garda Síochána and the Data Protection Commissioner's Office in the context of the sharing of child protection/child risk information with the Teaching Council when it relates to a registered teacher.

## **Other relevant Fitness to Teach developments during the reporting year**

Engagement with UK teaching regulators took place regarding a potential No Deal Brexit scenario. In particular, the implications in relation to data sharing post Brexit with non-EU countries were considered in the context of fitness to teach information, in terms of both incoming and outgoing information.



## 5 Initial Teacher Education & Induction

Promoting high standards across the continuum of teacher education is central to the work of the Teaching Council. The Council's functions in this area begins when a teacher enters initial teacher education, and continue throughout the teacher's career.

### Review and Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Programmes

The Teaching Council reviews and accredits programmes of initial teacher education to ensure that they are suitable for preparing student teachers for entry to the profession.

Action twelve in the Department of Education Teacher Supply Action plan (2018) requests the Higher Education Authority (HEA) to engage with the ITE programme providers to ensure that additional four-year concurrent post-primary ITE programmes are in place for 2019/2020 which qualify teachers in two subject areas, including targeted subjects (Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Computer Science, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Gaeilge, Home Economics).

The Teaching Council appointed and convened Review Panels to review eight concurrent post-primary programme submissions in the reporting period. Four of these programmes were accredited in the targeted subject areas of French, German, Irish, Maths. Accreditation of the Computer Science element for two of these programmes was deferred until such time as approved subject specific criteria for Computer Science are available. The other four programmes in the subject areas of Gaeilge, Languages, Art, Design and Technology are being progressed through the review and accreditation process.

The Council received a submission from one provider for the introduction of a programme of primary PME (Professional Master of Education). The provider subsequently decided not to proceed with the submission during this reporting year.

## **Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education (ITE)**

The Initial Teacher Education (ITE) team continued with the review of the Council's criteria and guidelines for programmes of ITE as set out in the document 'Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers (2011)'. Following on from Phase 1 and 2 of the review process completed in 2018 and 2019 consecutively, revised standards for ITE were drafted, drawing on feedback received during Phase 1 and 2, relevant literature, strategy and policy documents. A comprehensive consultation process was commenced in September 2019, during which key stakeholders and partners were invited to discuss and offer feedback on draft iterations of the document "Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education". A series of 12 consultation sessions were held between September 2019 and February 2020. Written submissions were also invited from stakeholders and a total of 24 submissions were received.

Initially, it was proposed that both the Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers (2017) and the Guidelines on School Placement (2013) would be combined and updated. However, during the drafting phase, and considering the Interim Report of the School Placement Working Group, it was evident that a separate document on school placement was still warranted.

## **Ministerial Advice:**

The Teaching Council provided advice to the Minister for Education in relation to qualification equivalences for access to the Professional Master of Education (PME) (Primary Teaching). A consultation session was held in May 2019 with relevant stakeholders. A report was drafted and finalised taking account of the feedback at the consultation session. The report was approved by Council in July 2019 and subsequently sent to the Minister.

## **School Placement**

A School Placement Working Group was convened in November 2018. The Group was tasked with working towards a coordinated, appropriate and sustainable approach to school placement, to review the implementation of school placement guidelines and the recommendations of Teaching Council commissioned research on school placement (Hall et al, 2018). The Group chaired by the Teaching Council comprised 18 members and included representatives from the Higher Education Institutions, Teacher Unions, Irish Federation of University Teachers, the Management bodies, Department of Education (DE), Senior Officials, the DE Inspectorate, the Higher Education Authority and the Teaching Council.

The Working Group met four times during the reporting year and finalised its report and action plan in December 2019. The report was considered by Council at its December meeting and it was also sent for consideration to the Department of Education. The report recommendations and further steps are being considered by the Department in conjunction with the Teaching Council.

## **Qualifications assessment**

In accordance with the EU Directive 2005/36/EC on the mutual recognition of qualifications (as amended), the Teaching Council is the competent authority in Ireland for assessing applications for registration from persons recognised as teachers in other EU/EEA countries. The Council also assesses applications for registration from teachers who qualified outside of the EU/EEA. Applicants must meet the criteria as set out in The Teaching Council [Registration] Regulations.

591 applications for qualification assessment were approved for registration during the reporting year. 270 of these were primary applications and 321 were post-primary applications.

## **New online supports for applicants**

An e-book/animation was made available on the Teaching Council website in Q3 2019. The e-book outlines the three distinct stages for overseas applicants: application, assessment and registration.

The website was updated in Q2 2019 to include a specific section for teachers 'Qualified outside of Ireland'. All information in relation to registration requirements are clearly defined using accessible language to facilitate teachers to understand requirements to be a teacher in Ireland. A dedicated persona has been created on the website, 'I am a teacher who qualified overseas', to simplify and clarify any queries a potential applicant may have. The website continues to be a comprehensive resource for teachers applying for registration and is reviewed and updated regularly.

## **Subject criteria review**

The Council's review of the Curricular Subject Requirements at post-primary level was finalised during the reporting year. The requirements were reviewed with the aim of maintaining and protecting the standard while increasing flexibility in the system. Following a wide-ranging and comprehensive consultation process conducted between June 2018 and April 2019, which included consultation with the Department and its Inspectorate, a revised set of post-primary curricular subject requirements was approved by the Council at its meeting in October 2019. These revised requirements were sent to the Department for its considered views on 15 November 2019.

Requirements for the Leaving Certificate curricular subjects of Politics and Society and Computer Science were also finalised during the reporting year and included in the revised set of post-primary curricular subject requirements.

## **Droichead**

Droichead, the Council's integrated induction framework for newly qualified teachers, entered the fourth year of its growth phase during the reporting year. During this growth phase, Droichead was the sole route of induction in Special Education Teaching (SET) settings, post-primary schools with more than 200 students, primary schools with 16 or more mainstream teachers and all primary schools with administrative principals. Communications were issued to all schools in the mandatory category for 2019/2020 advising of same.

## **Droichead Quality Assurance Process for 2018/2019**

The fourth cycle of the Droichead Quality Assurance (DQA) process was carried out during this reporting year. The DQA panel aimed to visit 24 schools, 12 primary and 12 post-primary, in order to report to the Teaching Council on the findings in relation to the operation of Droichead and the quality of the process in those schools. The schools were selected by a random process. The questions asked in schools were reviewed and updated from the previous year by the panel in order to obtain more specific and more detailed information on the process which had taken place in the schools in 2018/19. The randomised selection of 24 schools contained a reasonable balance of school types in both sectors given the small sample number overall. All schools approached were very willing to co-operate with the DQA process. The restrictions introduced following the onset of Covid-19 in March 2020 meant that only 16 of the 24 schools could be visited.

The focus of the DQA as in previous processes is placed on consistency rather than uniformity in the operation of Droichead in schools. The findings from the process, as outlined, give a good indication of how schools are continuing to develop the Droichead process and achieving the balance between uniformity and consistency within the individual school context. All DQA reports are available to view on the Teaching Council website.



## 6 Teachers' Learning and Research

### Teachers' learning

#### Cosán

As part of the Cosán Development Process, workshops for teachers took place in 10 Education Centres throughout the country. These provided attendees with an opportunity to discuss and plan their involvement in the Cosán Development Process with each other and with the Teaching Council staff.

Focus groups took place in the Teaching Council's offices in May 2019 with teachers who had attended the Cosán workshops. These provided an opportunity to gather valuable feedback to support the Cosán Development Process and inform the next steps. Subsequently, in the second half of 2019, it was decided to prioritise school (rather than individual teacher) engagement with the Cosán Development Process, and meetings took place with Education Support Centres Ireland (ESCI) to plan and co-design a programme of workshops to support such engagement. The programme consisted of three workshops and a number of collaborative school-based tasks. In October 2019, the Council provided a two-day professional development programme for 12 practising teachers to facilitate the workshop series.

These Cosán workshops took place in Dublin West, Navan, Kilkenny, Limerick, Clare and Donegal Education Centres and were supported by the Education Centres as part of their programmes of local courses. Schools were invited to nominate three teachers (including a senior school leader) to attend the workshop programme. At the end of the reporting year, planning was underway for the final workshop in the first series, and it was decided to redesign this as an online workshop, due to the public health advice in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.



A Cosán event took place on 24 October 2019, in collaboration with the Department of Education, for support services, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Education Centres and the Centre for School Leadership (CSL). The then Minister for Education, Joe McHugh T.D. opened the event and Dr Fiona King, Associate Professor in the School of Inclusive and Special Education at DCU, gave the keynote address. At the event, attendees were asked to consider how they could align Cosán and their respective work programmes and support teachers in reflecting on their professional learning.

During the reporting year, the Council engaged with a wide range of education stakeholders in relation to Cosán. Bi-lateral engagement on Cosán took place with Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT), the Association of Teachers/Education Centres of Ireland (ATECI) now the Education Support Centres Ireland (ESCI), Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), Post-Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI), Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board, Solas, Further Education Support Service (FESS), The National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT), Gaisce, The Centre for School Leadership (CSL), and The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning.

The Council also presented on Cosán to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), subject associations, the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), the Irish Primary Principals' Network (IPPN), Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) Principals and Deputy Principals, and Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI).

The Cosán Working Group met on two occasions during the reporting year and considered feedback from workshops, school visits, focus groups and stakeholder engagement to inform their ongoing work in relation to the Cosán Development Process. A guest speaker from The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education presented to the group on the National Forum's framework for professional learning.

## RESEARCH

### Webinars – opportunities for schools to support professional learning

In keeping with Cosán, the national framework for teachers' learning, engagement with research webinars is recognised as a valuable professional learning opportunity. In that context, the Council broadcasts webinars on a range of themes as part of its CROÍ (Collaboration and Research for Ongoing Innovation) research series. Schools are encouraged to watch a webinar recording as a school-based professional learning community, or as a cluster of schools. Four research webinars were hosted during the reporting year. A number of these were hosted jointly with relevant partners such as the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) and the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST). As with all research webinars, recordings are available on the research pages of the Council's website.

### John Coolahan Research Support Framework

The John Coolahan Research Support Framework aims to support teachers to adopt an innovative and evidence-informed approach to their professional practice. Applications were invited for the third round of the John Coolahan Research Support Framework in May 2019. Some 37 applications were received and considered by the appointed review panel. An awards event took place in December 2019, at which 24 projects were awarded funding, with more than €86,000 awarded in total across the projects.

The Research Support Framework review panel also met to consider the eleven final reports which were received from researchers who had received funding under previous rounds of the John Coolahan Research Support Framework. Final payments were arranged, and reports were published on the Teaching Council website.

Some 16 researchers who were awarded funding under previous rounds of the John Coolahan Research Support Framework presented on their projects at FÉILTE's ResearchMeet in October 2019.

## Research Ezines

As part of the Council's CROÍ Research series, six research ezines were produced during the reporting year. Four of these adopted a thematic focus covering Curricular Reform, Digital Technology in Our Schools, Assessment and Inclusion. Each of these included short summaries of relevant articles and links to the full text of each.

Another was a special edition ezine to mark World Book Day in which 20 eBooks from the Teaching Council's online library were reviewed by school leaders, practising teachers, policy makers and researchers.

## Teachers' Research Exchange (T-REX)

T-REX (Teachers' Research Exchange) is an online platform to support engagement in and with research by teachers and other educational researchers. It offers support in accessing and sharing the latest insights from cutting-edge research. It also facilitates and supports conversations, collaborations and stronger connections between research, policy, practice and between schools and HEIs. The platform is funded jointly by the Teaching Council, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), the Centre for Effective Services and the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. As a co-funder, the Council is represented on the T-REX Steering Committee which met four times during the reporting year.

## Commissioned Research

During the reporting year, a stakeholder event took place as part of the DEEPEN (Droichead: Exploring and Eliciting Perspectives Experiences and Narratives) research project. This research has been commissioned by the Teaching Council and is being carried out by Marino Institute of Education and Trinity College. It seeks to research teachers' experiences of the Droichead professional induction framework. It is exploring a range of topics including the roles and responsibilities of those engaging in and supporting the Droichead process; resourcing and supports for the process; the impact of Droichead on school culture; and the connections between the Droichead process and initial teacher education. It has a particular focus on small schools, Gaelscoileanna, DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) schools and special education settings.

The DEEPEN research team presented their Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to the Council's Education Committee in September 2019 and piloted a number of survey instruments in February 2020.

In parallel, a scoping exercise continued during the year in relation to longitudinal research exploring the professional journeys of beginning teachers in Ireland. A market soundings exercise for this project was completed in May 2019 and meetings took place with the Department of Education (DES) and the Higher Education Authority (HEA) regarding co-funding the project.



## Research Engagement Group (REG)

The Research Engagement Group (REG) is comprised of registered teachers and others with experience of, and interest in, research in the areas of teaching, learning and/or assessment. The group represents a broad spectrum of teaching contexts and research interests, and endeavours to support the Council's research work. It does this by promoting engagement by teachers in, and with, research and by promoting engagement between teachers and other educational researchers. During the year, members of the Group participated on the John Coolahan Research Support Framework review panel, summarised articles for inclusion in its research ezines and took part in the Council's ResearchMeet as part of FÉILTE 2019. They also helped to shape the 2020/2021 CROÍ programme. The group met twice during the reporting year.

## Online Library

The Teaching Council provides all registered teachers with free access to an online library of journals and eBooks. To access the library, registered teachers must log in using their Teaching Council Registration Number.

A social media and poster campaign was launched in May 2019 to promote the online library and other resources for teachers under the Council's CROÍ research series. Two instructional videos on how to access and search the online library were also published on the Teaching Council's website during the reporting year.



## 7 Promoting teaching as a profession

### Teacher Supply

The Council continues to support efforts to increase the supply of teachers for both the primary and post-primary sectors in line with the Teacher Supply Action Plan.

The Council has representation on the Steering Group, its Implementation Group and on three of the four established working groups, namely the Data, Higher Education and Communications Working Group.

The Communications Working Group, which is chaired by the Director of the Council, continued its consultation process with all stakeholders in line with the Teacher Supply Action Plan. The second national consultative forum was held in May 2019 while a third national consultative forum was held in November 2019. In addition, the second round of five regional focus groups with student teachers, teachers, parents and principals was due to commence in March 2020 however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, they were deferred until further notice. Planning for the fourth national consultative forum was also temporarily deferred.

Other actions from the group included attendance at career and recruitment fairs, increased engagement with guidance organisations and regional guidance counsellors, supporting the launch of the SubSeeker portal, the continuation of the Teaching Transforms promotional campaign with targeted advertisements being placed across radio, digital and social media.

## Promoting the profession

The Teaching Council communicates with stakeholders to explain its role and responsibilities, to build understanding of what its work means, and to generate support for its efforts to regulate and promote the profession of teaching, in the public interest.

### During the year, the Council:

- > Hosted the seventh annual FÉILTE event on Friday, 27 October and Saturday, 28 September 2019 at National University of Ireland Galway.
- > Issued 28 ezines, including two video ezines, with an average open rate of 38%.
- > Had almost two million page views on its website from over 410,420 users, 76.1% of whom were new.
- > Increased its Twitter followers by over 3,059 to a total of 30,600.
- > Facebook followers increased by over 1,149 to 7,458.
- > Attended a number of education conferences, seminars and meetings hosted by stakeholders, for example, University College Cork (UCC) PME 2 Research seminar; European Prison Education Association (EPEA) panel discussion; Visit of delegates from the Northeast Normal University, China; Four Nations (Teaching Council of Ireland and the UK) meeting; Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's (DPER) EU Structural Reform Support Programme outreach event; Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO) Education Conference; Research Strategy Consultation with National Council for Curriculum Assessment (NCCA); E-InFo-TED policy meeting in Brussels on the role and importance of teacher educators as a professional group; TAIEX Study Visit on Building of Research Networks with Dublin City University (DCU) Institute of Education; Leadership for Learning Seminar with NCCA; Annual Conference for Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) Principals and Deputy Principals; Sustainable School Leadership facilitated discussion with Irish Primary Principal's Network (IPPN); Meeting with Joint Managerial Bodies (JMB) Principals and Meeting with Creative Ireland regarding Initial Teacher Education.
- > Met with final year teacher education students in 18 Higher Education Institutes (HEIs).

## Media relations

As part of its strategy to promote the profession and increase understanding of the Council's work, the Council engages in proactive media outreach, as well as responding to queries from the media. During the year media releases were issued and articles placed on a range of topics, including Supply Panels and Droichead, FÉILTE 2019, Teachers' Wellbeing, Recognition of the Transformative Role of Teachers, Online Renewals Notice, Candidates for Teaching Council Elections, FÉILTE 2020, School Placements affected by Covid-19, State Exams, Offices closed to the Public due to Covid-19, Initial Teacher Education and Gaeltacht Learning Period, among other commentaries provided.

## FÉILTE

FÉILTE 2019 took place in NUI Galway on Friday, 27 and Saturday, 28 September. More than 750 teachers and members of the public attended the event with 1,865 people viewing online. The theme of the festival was ‘Education 360: Learning from Others’ which sits within the overarching objective of FÉILTE – Sharing Teaching, Connecting Learning. There were over 46 showcases and 12 workshops (thematically zoned) spanning projects from across the education sector. They were all teacher-led and demonstrated the innovation happening in teaching and learning in schools across the country.

Friday evening began with a Sharing Stories event with internationally renowned educationalist, Andy Hargreaves. The evening continued with group conversations including an informal address and participation by the then Minister for Education, Joe McHugh T.D. ‘Teachers Got Talent’ showcased some wonderful poetry, music and humour. This brought a close to the Friday evening event which was noted as being a very warm and welcoming introduction to FÉILTE 2019.

Saturday morning began with an opening address from Noelle Moran, Chairperson of The Teaching Council followed by Andy Hargreaves’ keynote address. In conversation with Tomás Ó Ruairc, Andy Hargreaves remarked on the positive nature of FÉILTE, and how it very much felt like a festival and celebration, rather than an educational conference. Participants were not only talking but were showing and sharing practice with a desire to improve.

The first of the panel discussions was on ‘Leaders in the Community’. Tomás Ó Ruairc facilitated the discussion around the integral part that leaders in communities play in the lives of the students. The second Panel Discussion was on ‘Inclusive Education’. This began with an address from Dr Finn Ó Murchú, Head of School of Education, Mary Immaculate College (UL), followed by a discussion with all panellists.

There were a range of Meets held which provided an opportunity for teachers and students to network and learn from each other. As well as TeachMeet and ResearchMeet, an audience of student teachers were invited to StudentMeet, which had a panel of newly qualified teachers and principals. LeadershipMeet was also held to facilitate leaders and aspiring leaders in the school community to gather and address the opportunities and challenges facing school communities. For the first time, a BreakfastMeet was held on Saturday morning, allowing attendees to network before the opening address.

The sprinkling of entertainment and food throughout the day allowed attendees to take time out, chat, relax and enjoy the festival at their leisure. When the panel discussions had concluded, FÉILTE 2019 was brought to a close by Tomás Ó Ruairc, Director of The Teaching Council.

## Papers and publications

In a further initiative to promote the profession of teaching, the Director of the Council regularly presents papers on issues related to the Council’s work, engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, teachers, parents and the wider public, including:

- Webinars on a variety of topics;
- Organisations promoting overall wellbeing including conferences focused on teachers’ wellbeing and events promoting research conducted by and for teachers;
- Consultation to offer advice on the draft NCCA Research Strategy;
- Keynote address by the Director of the Council at the Annual South Eastern Seaboard Research Conference;
- Presentation to UCC PME Year 2 students of their school placement research projects;
- Stakeholder briefings/meetings relating to Teacher Supply;
- Presentation at the European Prison Association International Conference;
- Panel Discussion on ‘Teaching in Ireland’ at Grad Ireland Summer Fair.

## BEACONS (Bringing Education Alive for our Communities On a National Scale)

The Council is exploring a unique process of supporting and facilitating conversations at local level among students, parents, teachers, leaders and wider school communities. BEACONS, which has successfully proven its concepts on a small scale, seeks to build stronger school communities through more and better conversations between all involved in education.

Five events were held between May and November 2019. These included an inaugural and follow up event in Ennistymon, Co. Clare, an event in Baltinglass, Co. Wicklow and the North-East Inner City of Dublin. The first ever themed BEACONS event, specifically focused on Inclusive Education, was also held in Ennis, Co. Clare. In December 2019, a sharing learning event was held in the Council offices where participants from the previous events came together with national stakeholder bodies to share their thoughts and their learning.

In 2019, BEACONS was one of 18 projects awarded funding from the Public Service Innovation Fund.

Preparations are ongoing for further events with the possibility of moving BEACONS online also being explored due to Covid-19.

## Statements made by the Council during the reporting year included the following:

Month	Statement
<b>April 2019</b>	Teaching Council Statement on Supply Panels and Droichead
<b>August 2019</b>	Teaching Council launches FÉILTE 2019
<b>September 2019</b>	Transformative Role of Teachers to be recognised by Teaching Council
<b>February 2020</b>	Candidates for Teaching Council Elections
<b>February 2020</b>	Teaching Council moving to Online Renewals notices
<b>March 2020</b>	School Placements affected by Covid-19
<b>March 2020</b>	Statement regarding Initial Teacher Education and Gaeltacht Learning Period from Department of Education and Skills and Teaching Council

## Introducing student teachers to the Teaching Council

Each year, the Council produces an NQT pack for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) to provide applicants with everything they need to know about their professional registration with the Council. Council staff carry out on-site presentations to the final year student teachers in each Higher Education Institution to explain the registration process and requirements such as vetting.

Of the 19 scheduled visits a total of six were completed during the reporting year. The remaining visits were suspended due to Covid-19 restrictions with the information being provided to the student teachers using the HEIs online platforms. In addition to the NQT packs, a video was developed and circulated to support the NQT registration process.

## Website

The Council's website had almost two million (1,976,863) page views from over 410,420 unique users during the reporting year, 76% of which were from new visitors.

## Gaeilge

Forálann an Chomhairle go sonrach do sheachadadh a cuid seirbhísí i nGaeilge, faoi threoir fhoráil Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003. Cuirtear foilseacháin agus ríomhírisí na Comhairle ar fáil i mBéarla agus i nGaeilge de ghnáth. Maidir le gach comhfhreagras i nGaeilge a fuarthas i gcaitheamh na bliana, le ríomhphost, sa phost nó mar ghlaio gutháin, d'fhéach an Chomhairle chuige gur cainteoir Gaeilge a thug freagra air.

The Council makes specific provision for the delivery of its services in the Irish language, guided by the provisions of the Official Languages Act, 2003. Council publications and ezines are generally made available in English and Irish. During the year, the Council ensured that all communication received in the Irish language, by email, post or telephone, was responded to by an Irish speaker.





## 8 Developing and maintaining an efficient and effective organisation

The Teaching Council aims to run an effective and efficient organisation.

### Finance

The Council's expenditure in the 2019 financial year was €7.59 million, an increase of €0.1 million compared to 2018. The main driver of the increase in costs is the higher staffing level required to support additional functions and an increased number of registrants. This was offset somewhat by a reduced spend on research.

The Council's income (including interest and net rental income less tax) was €7.62 million, an increase of €0.54 million over 2018. The increase reflects the growth in the number of teachers on the Register along with the strong performance of the Council's investment portfolio in its first year.

The prudent financial strategy being followed, allied to a continuous focus on cost control, has enabled the Council to pursue its ambitious objectives while ensuring that its registration fees have been maintained at their current level for several years.

The Council's investment portfolio enjoyed a strong performance in 2019. The performance in the latter part of the reporting year was impacted by volatile markets as a result of the global pandemic. While the volatility is expected to continue for some time, recent months have seen a solid return to growth. The Council is taking a long-term view of the portfolio and is not unduly concerned by short-term fluctuations.

## Human resources

The Council approved a Workforce Plan (2018-2020) in accordance with Department of Public Expenditure and Reform guidelines. The plan, which examined the deployment and usage of human resources in the context of the Council's range of statutory functions, concluded that additional staff resources would be needed in order that key statutory functions could be undertaken effectively.

- Following an external review, the plan was approved by the Council and submitted to the Department of Education for sanction to recruit 10 additional staff. The Council undertook three recruitment competitions at Clerical Officer, Executive Officer and Higher Executive Officer grades and established panels for the filling of vacancies as they arise. In 2020 these additional posts were filled through internal and external recruitment processes.

A managed services function continues to form an additional resource to the Council, providing a telephone call answering and front line administration service. This enables the Council to match staffing resources with fluctuations in demand for our services.

## Information and Communications Technology

Disaster recovery and business continuity arrangements were further enhanced during the year and additional applications were migrated to the cloud. The ICT team was strengthened by the recruitment of an additional staff member. The emphasis on security arrangements continued with an IT security review carried out in late 2019.

The outbreak of Covid-19 placed a strong focus on the Council's IT infrastructure and its ability to support remote working. The IT department has played a key role in ensuring the work of the Council continued during the crisis.

Work continued on the strategic project to replace the registration database. When completed in early 2021, the new system will drive significant efficiencies and cost savings and lead to improved customer service.

## Corporate Governance

Throughout the year the Council continued a programme of work to ensure its compliance with the provisions of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

The Council developed and implemented a Risk Management Policy during the year which formalised and enhanced its risk management process. The Audit and Risk Committee was strengthened with the recruitment of two external members who bring significant relevant knowledge and experience to the Committee.

A Code of Practice Working Group was established in December 2019 to review the Council's Code of Practice. The Working Group continued to meet in early 2020 but its work was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is set to continue this work and submit the revised Code to the Council for approval in due course.

## Data Protection

As the professional standards body for the teaching profession, the Council continues to promote high standards in data protection practices and takes its responsibilities very seriously in the processing of personal data in line with data protection legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

The Council continuously reviews all its practices where personal data is processed to ensure full compliance with data protection legislation and has enhanced awareness among Council staff on the principles of data protection and the safeguarding of personal data.



The Council's Privacy Policy, Retention and Process Inventories are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure they adhere to legislation and best practice in the delivery of appropriate data protection procedures. Additionally, the Council ensures that robust data processing agreements are in place with all suppliers that process personal data.

In March 2020, the Council's IT Team detected an unauthorised attempt by an external source to access a small number of email accounts on foot of a phishing email.

This phishing attack resulted in emails being auto forwarded to an external source for a short period of time. A detailed analysis was carried out in conjunction with an external provider and it was discovered that 323 emails were affected, one of which included two spreadsheets containing the registration details of a number of registered teachers. The Teaching Council takes this matter and the security of data very seriously and reported the matter to the Data Protection Commissioner.

Additionally, the Council contacted all the individuals whose names are included in the spreadsheets to advise them of the occurrence. Affected individuals were advised that the risk of a security threat is not likely but that they should be vigilant if they receive any suspicious emails or written requests from unknown third parties, and to verify the identity of any unknown third party before disclosing personal data.

The Data Protection Commission subsequently commenced an Inquiry into the matter, which is ongoing, and the Council is continuing to cooperate fully with them in this regard. A full and thorough review of this matter has also been conducted by the Teaching Council.

## **Freedom of Information**

The Council is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997, and the Freedom of Information (Amendment) Act 2014. The Council received 10 Freedom of Information (FOI) requests during the year.

## **Registration Database Replacement Project**

The Registration Database replacement project continued throughout the 2019/2020 annual report year. This project relates to the replacement of the Council's current registration database system.

Procurement for the vendor of the registration database replacement system followed the public service procurement rules and the successful vendor was selected and approved by Council in December 2019.

Implementation of the new system commenced in January 2020 and will continue throughout the year of 2020 with a go-live date in Quarter 1, 2021.

The new system will drive significant efficiencies and cost savings and will lead to improved customer service. Teachers and applicants will see a new and improved self-service portal that will allow for online registration and vetting applications.

## **Ombudsman**

The Council received one query from the Ombudsman's office in relation to a complaint submitted by a teacher regarding a registration matter. The Council provided all the relevant information and clarifications requested. The Ombudsman returned an outcome of 'complaint not upheld' during the next reporting period.

# Appendices

**Appendix 1** Financial Statements

**Appendix 2** Teaching Council members

**Appendix 3** Committees and panels

**Appendix 4** Council members' expenses 2019

# Appendix 1

## The Teaching Council Financial Statements

### Chairperson:

Noelle Moran

### Deputy-Chairperson:

Seán McMahon

### Council Members:

Asiya Al-Tawash

Sinead Brett

(appointed 10 April 2019)

Geoffrey Browne

Elizabeth Cooney

Catherine Cross

(appointed 14 August 2019)

Michael Delargey

Karen Devine

Brendan Doody

Catherine Doolan

Niall Duddy

Patricia Duffy

Peter Finnegan

Pat Gilmore

Mairéad Glynn

(resigned 16 December 2019)

Colm Harte

John Holian

Ferdia Kelly

(resigned 16 December 2019)

Mary Kelly

Gregor Kerr

Gerry Leydon

Máire Lineen

Denis Magner

Dr. Anthony Malone

Claire Markey

Prof. Marie McLoughlin

Seamus Mulconry

(resigned 11 March 2019)

Dr. Melanie Ní Dhuinn

Deirdre O'Connor

Séamus O'Connor

Séamus Ó Fearraigh

Seán O'Neill

Gerry Quinn

Eamonn Shaughnessy

Tracie Tobin

Frank Turpin



### Auditors

Crowleys DFK  
Chartered Accountants and  
Statutory Audit Firm  
16/17 College Green  
Dublin 2

### Business Address

Block A  
Maynooth Business Campus  
Maynooth  
Co. Kildare

### Bankers

Bank of Ireland  
Main Street  
Maynooth  
Co. Kildare

### Solicitors

Fieldfisher (formerly McDowell  
Purcell Partnership)  
Solicitors  
The Capel Building  
Mary's Abbey, Dublin 7  
Byrne Wallace Solicitors  
88 Harcourt Street  
Dublin 2

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## Governance

The Teaching Council was established under the Teaching Council Act 2001. The functions of the Council are set out in section 7 of this Act. The Council is accountable to the Minister for Education and is responsible for ensuring good governance and performs this task by setting strategic objectives and targets and taking strategic decisions on all key business issues. The day-to-day management, control and direction of the Teaching Council are the responsibility of the Director/CEO and the senior management team. The Director/CEO and the senior management team must follow the broad strategic direction set by the Council, and must ensure that all Council members have a clear understanding of the key activities and decisions related to the organisation, and of any significant risks likely to arise. The Director/CEO acts as a direct liaison between the Council and the management of the Teaching Council.

## Council Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of the Council are set out in its Code of Practice which also contains the matters specifically reserved for Council decision. Standing items considered by the Council include:

- Declaration of interests
- Approval of minutes of previous meetings
- The Director's Report
- To receive and consider reports from committees and make decisions where appropriate
- Reserved matters

Section 18 of the Teaching Council Act 2001 requires the Council to keep all proper and usual accounts and records of money received and expended and all property, assets and liabilities of the Council.

In preparing these financial statements the Council is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that it will continue in operation
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements

The Council is responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, its financial position and enables it to ensure that the financial statements comply with Section 18 of the Teaching Council Act 2001. The maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information on the Teaching Council's website is the responsibility of the Council.

The Council is responsible for approving the annual plan and budget.

The Council is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Council considers that the financial statements of the Teaching Council give a true and fair view of the financial performance and the financial position of the Teaching Council at 31 December 2019.

## Council Structure

The Teaching Council is made up of 37 voluntary members, as follows:

- Eleven primary teachers (nine elected and two teacher union nominees)
- Eleven post-primary teachers (seven elected and four teacher union nominees)
- Two nominated by colleges of education
- Two nominated by specified third-level bodies
- Four nominated by school management (two primary and two post-primary)
- Two nominated by parents' associations (one primary and one post-primary) and
- Five nominated by the Minister for Education including one representing each of IBEC and ICTU.

Council members are appointed for a four-year term. See Council information at beginning of the financial statements for details on the current Council.

The Council has established the following Committees and Panels:

- Executive Committee - facilitates the efficient and effective functioning of the Council by conducting the business of the Council between Council meetings.
- Investigating Committee - any person may apply to the Investigating Committee for an inquiry into the fitness to teach of a registered teacher.
- Disciplinary Committee - a panel of the Disciplinary Committee will conduct a hearing on a complaint referred to it by the Investigating Committee.
- Registration Committee - advises the Council and makes recommendations in all areas relating to the registration of teachers.
- Education Committee - is responsible for making recommendations to the Council on policy relating to the continuum of teacher education.
- Finance Committee – oversees the Council's financial affairs.
- Audit and Risk Committee – monitors the system of internal control within the organisation and manages risk.
- Registration Review Group - the Registration Committee sits as the Registration Review Group in instances where teachers are unhappy with the outcome of a panel's decision and request a review of the initial decision.
- Registration Panel - is responsible for the assessment of issues which relate to the registration of teachers, such as the granting of extensions to those holding conditional registration.
- Evidence of Character Panel - assesses the evidence of character of applicants seeking to register as teachers with the Council. The Panel is also responsible for the assessment of fit and proper persons as part of the registration renewal process.
- Qualifications Panel - assesses the professional qualifications of applicants seeking to register as teachers.



## Disclosures required by the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016)

The Council is responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (“the Code”). The following disclosures are required by the Code:

### Consultancy Costs

Consultancy costs include the cost of external advice to management and exclude outsourced “business-as-usual” functions.

	2019 €	2018 €
Legal advice	79,278	82,876
Pension administration	16,429	15,690
Strategic planning (including IT Strategy)	-	8,312
Procurement	-	3,659
Internal control & internal audit	14,391	9,504
Communications	78,756	79,229
ICT	7,503	37,714
Human Resources	5,535	22,464
Project Management (Registration Database replacement project)	53,201	52,250
Investment management	17,938	-
	<u>273,031</u>	<u>311,698</u>

### Other Legal Costs

	2019 €	2018 €
Legal Costs – Registration	293,474	231,347
Legal Costs – Professional Standards	362,143	381,122
	<u>655,617</u>	<u>612,469</u>

### Travel & Subsistence Expenditure

	2019 €	2018 €
<b>Domestic</b>		
- Council members	146,244	137,381
- Staff	62,109	58,992
<b>International</b>		
- Council members	1,273	988
- Staff	10,383	13,027
	<u>220,009</u>	<u>210,388</u>
<u>Hospitality Expenditure</u>		
	2019 €	2018 €
Staff welfare	<u>1,239</u>	<u>6,583</u>

In 2018 subsidised health screening was provided for Council staff.

## Statement of Compliance

The Council has adopted the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016) and is putting procedures in place to ensure full compliance in 2020. During 2017 the Council undertook a gap analysis exercise to identify the areas to be addressed. Most of these were addressed by 2019. The outstanding work centres on Customer Service requirements.

## Future Developments

The Council plans to continue its present activities. The Council has commenced a development process for Cosán, the national framework for teachers' learning, due to conclude in 2020.

## Accounting Records

The Council is responsible under Section 18 of the Teaching Council Act, 2001, for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the organisation. The Council is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the organisation and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The accounting records of The Teaching Council are maintained at Maynooth Business Campus, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.

## Auditors

Crowleys DFK (Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm) were appointed auditors and they have expressed their willingness to continue in office.

## Going Concern

The council members have prepared budgets and cash flows for a period of at least twelve months from the date of the approval of the financial statements which demonstrate that there is no material uncertainty regarding the organisation's ability to meet its liabilities as they fall due, and to continue as a going concern. On this basis the council members consider it appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. Accordingly, these financial statements do not include any adjustments to the carrying amounts and the classification of the assets and liabilities that may arise if the organisation was unable to continue as a going concern.

## Events after the Balance Sheet Date

Subsequent to the financial year-end, the Covid-19 virus spread worldwide. In common with many other countries, the Irish government issued guidance and restrictions on the movement of people designed to slow the spread of this virus. In mid-March 2020, many organisations closed voluntarily and throughout the month, more restrictions were placed on people and businesses. On 28 March, all "non-essential" businesses were instructed to close temporarily. As a result, the Council offices closed to the public and most employees are working remotely.

In light of these events, the Council members have assessed the potential financial impact on the organisation and they believe that the main exposure relates to the valuation of the organisation's investment portfolio. At year-end the portfolio valuation was €12.35m. In the intervening months, turmoil in global markets has resulted in significant fluctuations in this valuation. As at 30 June 2020, the value of the portfolio was €12.09m. The Council considers the portfolio as a long term investment and expects the valuation to improve over time.

As it is the opinion of the Council members that the above events are non-adjusting events, the financial results of the organisation have not been adjusted for the impact these events have had on the organisation since the balance sheet date.

## Statement on Relevant Audit Information

There is no relevant audit information of which the statutory auditors are unaware. The council members have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and they have established that the statutory auditors are aware of that information.

On behalf of the Council

**Seán McMahon**

Chairperson

Date: 13 July 2020

**Tomás Ó Ruairc**

Director

# Statement on Internal Control

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## Scope of Responsibility

On behalf of the members of The Teaching Council I acknowledge our responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal control is in place and operating.

## Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to an acceptable level rather than to eliminate it. The system can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or detected in a timely way.

The system of internal control, which accords with Guidance issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has been in place in The Teaching Council for the year ended 31 December 2019 and up to the date of approval of the financial statements.

## Capacity to Handle Risk

During 2019, The Teaching Council had an Audit and Risk Committee comprising five Council members and two independent external members. The Committee met four times in 2019.

The Teaching Council outsources its internal audit function which is adequately resourced and conducts a programme of work agreed with the Audit and Risk Committee.

The Audit and Risk Committee has developed a Risk Management Policy which sets out its risk appetite, the risk management processes in place and details the roles and responsibilities of staff in relation to risk.

## Risk and Control Framework

The Teaching Council has implemented a risk management system which identifies and reports key risks and the management actions being taken to address and, to the extent possible, to mitigate those risks.

A risk register is in place which identifies the key risks facing the Teaching Council and these have been identified, evaluated and graded according to their significance. The register is reviewed and updated by the Audit and Risk Committee on a quarterly basis. The outcome of these assessments is used to plan and allocate resources to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level.

The risk register details the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks. I confirm that a control environment containing the following elements is in place:

- Procedures for all key business processes have been documented
- Financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability
- A comprehensive planning and budgetary system is in operation and expenditure trends are reviewed on a monthly basis

## Statement on Internal Control

- Procedures for addressing the financial implications of major business risks include financial instructions and notes of procedures, delegation practices such as authorisation limits approved by Council and segregation of duties between processing and approval of payments
- Systems are in place to safeguard both physical assets and the integrity of the information and communication technology systems

## Ongoing Monitoring and Review

Formal procedures have been established for monitoring control processes and control deficiencies are communicated to those responsible for taking corrective action and to management and Council, where relevant, in a timely manner. I confirm that the following ongoing monitoring systems are in place:

- Key risks and related controls have been identified and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and report any identified deficiencies
- Reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned and
- There are regular reviews by senior management of monthly and annual performance and financial reports which indicate performance against budget

## Procurement

I confirm that The Teaching Council has procedures in place to ensure compliance with current procurement rules and guidelines and that during 2019 The Teaching Council complied with those procedures.

## Review of Effectiveness

I confirm that the Teaching Council has procedures to monitor the effectiveness of its risk management and control procedures. The Teaching Council's monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the system of internal financial control is informed by the work of the internal and external auditors, the Audit and Risk Committee which oversees their work, and the senior management within the Teaching Council responsible for the development and maintenance of the internal financial control framework.

## Internal Control Issues

I confirm that the Council conducted an annual review of the effectiveness of the internal controls for 2019.

On behalf of Council

**Seán McMahon**  
Chairperson

Date: 13 July 2020

# Independent auditor's report on the audit of the financial statements

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## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Teaching Council for the year ended 31 December 2019 which comprise the Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and the related notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies set out in note 1. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is Irish Law and FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the association as at 31 December 2019 and of its surplus for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland"; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 18 of the Teaching Council Act 2001.

## Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (ISAs (Ireland)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the council in accordance with ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of financial statements in Ireland, including the Ethical Standard issued by the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA), and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which ISAs (Ireland) require us to report to you where:

- the council members' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the council members have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the council's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

## Other Information

The council members are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our Auditor's Report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Based on the knowledge and understanding of the council and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified any material misstatements in the Governance Statement and Council Members' Report.

## Respective responsibilities

### Responsibilities of council members for the financial statements

As explained more fully in Governance Statement and Council Members' Report, the council members are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the council members are responsible for assessing the council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to the going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the council or to cease operation, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

### Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditor's Report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

### The purpose of our audit work and to whom we owe our responsibilities

Our report is made solely to the council's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 18 of the Teaching Council Act 2001. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the council's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditor's Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume any responsibility to anyone other than the council and the council's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

**Natalie Kelly**

for and on behalf of

**Crowleys DFK**

**Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm**

**16/17 College Green**

**Dublin 2**

Date: 13 July 2020



## Appendix to the Independent Auditors' Report

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### Further information regarding the scope of our responsibilities as auditor

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (Ireland), we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the organisation's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Council members.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Council members' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the organisation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our Auditor's Report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our Auditor's Report. However, future events or conditions may cause the organisation to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure, and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

# Income and Expenditure Account

for the year ended 31 December 2019

	Notes	2019 €	2018 €
<b>Income</b>			
Registration and Assessment Fees		7,152,917	6,927,015
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7,152,917</b>	<b>6,927,015</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Accommodation Costs		(153,436)	(114,114)
Staffing Costs		(4,175,344)	(3,909,111)
Professional Standards Costs		(384,920)	(409,705)
Other Administration Costs		(1,106,273)	(1,083,689)
Meeting Costs		(184,436)	(181,699)
Registration Costs		(190,462)	(168,646)
Information Technology Costs		(287,130)	(293,912)
Communications, Education and Research Costs		(776,072)	(955,949)
Depreciation	<b>7</b>	(334,213)	(365,527)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>(7,592,286)</b>	<b>(7,482,352)</b>
<b>Deficit on Ordinary Activities</b>		<b>(439,369)</b>	<b>(555,337)</b>
Interest receivable and similar income		296	21,775
Investment income		57,626	-
Fair value movement in Financial Assets		294,278	-
Property Rental Income		192,360	189,184
Property Management Costs		(73,021)	(44,033)
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) before taxation</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>32,170</b>	<b>(388,411)</b>
Taxation	<b>6</b>	(104)	(9,329)
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) after taxation</b>		<b>32,066</b>	<b>(397,740)</b>

There are no recognised surpluses or deficits other than the result for the above financial periods.

The result of the year has been generated exclusively from continuing operations.

The notes on pages 54 to 60 form part of these financial statements.

The financial statements were approved by the Council on 13 July 2020 and signed on its behalf by

**Seán McMahon**  
Chairperson

**Tomás Ó Ruairc**  
Director

# Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2019

	Notes	2019 €	2018 €
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>			
Tangible assets	7	4,163,323	4,434,150
<b>Financial Assets</b>	8	12,351,904	-
		16,515,227	4,434,150
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Receivables and Prepayments	9	52,802	30,982
Cash and Cash Equivalents		1,086,461	13,097,480
		1,139,263	13,128,462
<b>Current Liabilities: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	10	(248,179)	(188,367)
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		891,084	12,940,095
<b>Total Assets Less Current Liabilities</b>			
<b>Liabilities</b>		17,406,311	17,374,245
<b>Reserves</b>			
Designated Reserve	11	4,000,000	4,000,000
General Reserves	11	13,406,311	13,374,245
<b>Total Funds</b>		17,406,311	17,374,245

The notes on pages 54 to 60 form part of these financial statements.

The financial statements were approved by the Council on 13 July 2020 and signed on its behalf by

# Cash Flow Statement

for the year ended 31 December 2019

	Notes	2019 €	2018 €
<b>Reconciliation of operating deficit to net cash inflow from operating activities</b>			
Operating surplus/(deficit) (before interest received and tax)		31,874	(410,186)
Depreciation	3	334,213	365,527
(Increase) in debtors	9	(21,820)	(20,525)
Increase in creditors	10	59,812	47,039
<b>Net cash flow from operating activities</b>		<u>404,079</u>	<u>(18,145)</u>
<b>Cash Flow from Investing Activities</b>			
Interest received		296	21,775
Income from investment portfolio	13	(57,626)	-
Fair Value movement in investment portfolio	13	(294,278)	-
Funds transferred to investment portfolio	13	(12,000,000)	-
Taxation	13	(104)	(9,329)
Capital expenditure	13	<u>(63,386)</u>	<u>(19,686)</u>
<b>Net cash flow from investing activities</b>		<u>(12,415,098)</u>	<u>(7,240)</u>
<b>Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in cash and cash equivalents (Note 14)</b>			
Net (Decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(12,011,019)	(25,385)
Net cash and cash equivalents at 1 January 2019		<u>13,097,480</u>	<u>13,122,865</u>
<b>Net cash and cash equivalents at 31 December 2019</b>	<b>14</b>	<u>1,086,461</u>	<u>13,097,480</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Council on 13 July 2020 and signed on its behalf by

**Seán McMahon**  
Chairperson

**Tomás Ó Ruairc**  
Director

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2019

## 1. Accounting Policies

### 1.1. Basis of preparation

The financial statements are prepared on the going concern basis in accordance with FRS 102 “The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland” issued by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC). The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the organisations’ financial statements.

### 1.2. Income

Income comprises registration and assessment fees received during the year. All fees receivable are accounted for on a receipts basis, except for income from the review and accreditation of programmes of initial teacher education which is on an invoice basis. Teachers register throughout the year and this registration lasts for 12 months. Income is not deferred to reflect this. In 2014 the Council purchased Block A, Maynooth Business Campus and is in receipt of rental income from tenants of the building. This is included under “Property Rental Income” in the Income and Expenditure Account.

### 1.3. Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are stated at historic cost less accumulated depreciation.

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets, at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation, less estimated residual value, of each asset systematically over its expected useful life, as follows

Premises	2.5% straight line
Fixtures and Fittings	10% straight line
Computer Software	20% straight line
Computer Equipment	33.33% straight line

The carrying values of tangible fixed assets are reviewed annually for impairment in periods if events or changes in circumstances indicate the carrying value may not be recoverable.

At the end of each reporting period, the organisation assesses whether there is objective evidence of impairment of any financial assets that are measured at cost or amortised cost included unlisted investments, investments, loans, trade debtors and cash. If there is objective evidence of impairment, impairment losses are recognised in the Income and Expenditure in that financial year.

### 1.4. Pensions

The Council operates a defined benefit pension scheme for the majority of its employees. The scheme is based on the Public Service Model and is approved by the Minister for Education and the Minister for Finance. Pension benefits payable under the scheme are funded by the Exchequer.

In addition, the Council’s arrangements have a number of specific characteristics:

- the Council makes an agreed contribution to the Department of Education.
- the contribution comprises an employee element along with an employer element. In accordance with government policy on public sector pensions the employer’s contribution amounts to 25% of gross pay for employees paying PRSI at the A rate and 30% of gross pay for employees paying PRSI at the D rate.
- there is an explicit commitment from the Department of Education with the agreement of the Department of Finance that the Exchequer will meet the cost of benefits as they fall due.

#### 1.4. Pensions (cont'd)

The Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 introduced the new Single Public Service Pension Scheme ("Single Scheme") which commenced with effect from 1 January 2013. All new employees of the Teaching Council, who are new entrants to the public sector on or after 1 January 2013 are members of the Single Scheme.

The Council considers that its pension arrangements as described above have the same financial effect from the Council's point of view as a defined contribution scheme. It is of the view that the provisions of FRS 17, Accounting for Retirement Benefits, which arise under defined benefit schemes are not appropriate to its circumstances. Accordingly, it accounts for its contribution as if the scheme was a defined contribution scheme.

#### 1.5. Taxation

The Finance (No.2) Act 2013, Section 37, amends Schedule 4 to the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 to include the Teaching Council in the list of specified non-commercial State-sponsored bodies that qualify for exemption from certain tax provisions under Section 227 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997. This section exempts from income tax and corporation tax certain income arising which would otherwise be chargeable to tax under Case III, IV and V of Schedule D. Deposit interest remains subject to DIRT. The yearly charge for taxation is based on deposit interest for the year and is calculated with reference to the tax rate applying on the date the interest is received.

#### 1.6. Designated Reserves

The Council has determined that it may at its discretion set aside unrestricted funds for designated future purposes. Where such funds are no longer required for the intended purpose, they will be released to the General Reserve.

#### 1.7. Financial Assets

Financial assets held as non-current assets are stated at their market value. Any surplus or deficit is accounted for through the Income and Expenditure Account. Income from Financial Assets is recognised in the Income and Expenditure account in the year in which it is received.

#### 1.8. Debtors

Debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment. Loans receivable are measured initially at fair value, net of transaction costs, and are measured subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any impairment.

#### 1.9. Creditors

Creditors are initially recognised at fair value and thereafter stated at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method, unless the effect of discounting would be immaterial, in which case they are stated at cost.

#### 1.10. Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand comprises cash on deposit at banks requiring less than three months' notice of withdrawal.

## 2. Income

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The income of the organisation for the year has been derived from its principal activity wholly undertaken in Ireland.



### 3. Operating Surplus/(Deficit)

	2019 €	2018 €
<b>Operating surplus/(deficit) is stated after charging:</b>		
Depreciation	334,213	365,527

### 4. Staffing and Remuneration

<b>Staffing costs</b>	<b>2019 €</b>	<b>2018 €</b>
Wages and salaries	2,119,223	2,065,534
Social welfare costs	185,169	175,960
Pension costs	450,380	445,106
Managed Services & Agency staff cost	1,342,900	1,113,544
Training & Welfare costs	72,224	98,532
Sundry staff costs	5,448	10,435
	<u>4,175,344</u>	<u>3,909,111</u>

<b>(a) Aggregate Employee Benefits</b>	<b>2019 €</b>	<b>2018 €</b>
Staff short-term benefits	2,119,223	2,065,534
Retirement benefit costs	450,380	445,106
Employer's contribution to social welfare	185,169	175,960
	<u>2,754,772</u>	<u>2,686,600</u>

The total number of staff employed (WTE) at year end was 48.6 (2018: 43.6)

<b>(b) Staff Short-Term Benefits</b>	<b>2019 €</b>	<b>2018 €</b>
Basic pay	2,105,252	2,050,426
Overtime	3,464	4,739
Allowances	10,507	10,369
	<u>2,119,223</u>	<u>2,065,534</u>

#### (c) Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel in the Teaching Council consists of the Director/CEO, Deputy Director, Head of Teachers' Learning and Research, Head of Initial Teacher Education and Induction, Head of Registration, Head of Professional Standards and Head of Finance and Corporate Services. The total value of employee benefits for key management personnel is set out below:

	2019	2018
	€	€
Salary	618,996	598,979
	<u>618,996</u>	<u>598,979</u>

This does not include the value of retirement benefits earned in the period. The key management personnel (with the exception of the Director/CEO) are members of the Teaching Council pension scheme and their entitlements in that regard do not extend beyond the terms of the model public service pension scheme.

Council members do not receive any remuneration for their work on behalf of the Council.

(d) Director/CEO's Salary and Benefits	2019	2018
	€	€
Basic pay	115,503	105,226
	<u>115,503</u>	<u>105,226</u>

The Director/CEO is seconded to the Teaching Council from the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and is a member of that Department's pension scheme. His entitlements in that regard do not extend beyond the terms of the model public service pension scheme. The value of retirement benefits earned in the period is not included above.

#### (e) Employee Short-term Benefits Breakdown

Employees' short-term benefits in excess of €60,000 are categorised into the following bands:

Range		No. of Employees	
From	To	2019	2018
€60,000	€69,999	3	2
€70,000	€79,999	4	3
€80,000	€89,999	1	2
€90,000	€99,999	1	0
€100,000	€109,999	0	2
€110,000	€119,999	1	0

## 5. Pension Costs

The pension cost represents contributions payable by the Council to the pension fund.

## 6. Taxation

	2019 €	2018 €
<b>Current year taxation</b>		
DIRT	104	9,329

The Finance (No.2) Act 2013, Section 37, amends Schedule 4 to the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 to include the Teaching Council in the list of specified non-commercial State-sponsored bodies that qualify for exemption from certain tax provisions under Section 227 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997. This section exempts from income tax and corporation tax certain income arising which would otherwise be chargeable to tax under Case III, IV and V of Schedule D. Deposit interest remains subject to DIRT.

## 7. Tangible Assets

	Premises	Fixtures & Fittings	Computer Software	Computer Equipment	Total
	€	€	€	€	€
<b>Cost</b>					
At 1 January 2019	3,691,937	1,547,426	614,784	587,794	6,441,941
Additions	-	10,132	4,537	48,717	63,386
Disposals	-	(17,516)	-	(38,746)	(56,262)
At 31 December 2019	3,691,937	1,540,042	619,321	597,765	6,449,065
<b>Depreciation</b>					
At 1 January 2019	369,192	570,659	547,375	520,565	2,007,791
On disposals	-	(17,516)	-	(38,746)	(56,262)
Charge for the year	92,298	145,324	48,795	47,796	334,213
At 31 December 2019	461,490	698,467	596,170	529,615	2,285,742
<b>Net book values</b>					
At 31 December 2019	3,230,447	841,575	23,151	68,150	4,163,323
At 31 December 2018	3,322,745	976,767	67,409	67,229	4,434,150

## 8. Financial Assets

	2019 €	2018 €
<b>Fair value</b>		
At 1 January	-	-
Funds to portfolio	12,000,000	-
Fair value movement in financial assets	294,278	-
Investment income	57,626	-
At 31 December 2019	12,351,904	-

## 9. Receivables and Prepayments

	2019 €	2018 €
Other receivables	52,802	30,982
	<u>52,802</u>	<u>30,982</u>

The other receivables figure consists of 2019 rent receivable, monies owed from the IPPN and staff deductions due in relation to Bike to Work Scheme.

## 10. Payables: Amounts falling due within one year

	2019 €	2018 €
Other taxes and social security costs	90,459	448
Accruals	157,720	187,919
	<u>248,179</u>	<u>188,3678</u>

Tax and social insurance are subject to the terms of the relevant legislation. Interest accrues on late payment. No interest was due at the financial year end date.

The terms of accruals are based on the underlying contracts. The repayment terms of trade creditors vary.

	2019 €	2018 €
Included in other taxes and social security costs:		
PAYE/PRSI	62,357	-
PSWT	21,731	-
RCT	6,371	448
	<u>90,459</u>	<u>448</u>

## 11. Reserves

	General Reserve €	Designated Reserve €	Total €
<b>Opening Reserves</b>	13,374,245	4,000,000	17,374,245
Surplus for the year	32,066	-	32,066
<b>Closing Reserves</b>	<u>13,406,311</u>	<u>4,000,000</u>	<u>17,406,311</u>

In accordance with the Council's financial strategy the designated reserves have been established as a contingency reserve to cover any significant costs arriving from legal challenge to any part of the Teaching Council Acts, 2001 to 2015 and from any of the Council's rulings. In accordance with the Council's accounting policy where such funds are no longer required they will be released back to the General Reserve.

## 12. Related Party Transactions

In accordance with the Teaching Council Acts, 2001 to 2015 Council members are entitled to reimbursement of expenses necessarily incurred whilst engaging in the business of the Council and Committees of the Council. Council members who are teachers are also required to renew their registration annually. All transactions are conducted on an arms-length basis and have been incorporated into these financial statements.

## 13. Gross Cash Flows

	2019 €	2018 €
<b>Returns on Investments and Servicing of Finance</b>		
Interest received	296	21,775
<b>Taxation</b>		
DIRT	(104)	(9,329)
<b>Capital Expenditure and financial investment</b>		
Payments to acquire tangible assets	(63,386)	(19,686)
Transfer to investment portfolio	(12,000,000)	-
Income from investment portfolio	(57,626)	-
Fair Value movement in investment portfolio	(294,278)	-
	<u>(12,415,290)</u>	<u>(19,686)</u>

## 14. Analysis of Changes in Net Cash and Cash Equivalents

	Opening balance €	Cash flows €	Closing balance €
Cash at bank and in hand	13,097,480	(12,011,019)	1,086,461
Net Cash and Cash Equivalents	<u>13,097,480</u>	<u>(12,011,019)</u>	<u>1,086,461</u>

## 15. Post Balance Sheet Events

Subsequent to the financial year-end, the Covid-19 virus spread worldwide. In common with many other countries, the Irish government issued guidance and restrictions on the movement of people designed to slow the spread of this virus. In mid-March 2020, many organisations closed voluntarily and throughout the month, more restrictions were placed on people and businesses. On 28 March, all “non-essential” businesses were instructed to close temporarily. As a result, the Council offices closed to the public and most employees are working remotely.

In light of these events, the Council members have assessed the potential financial impact on the organisation and they believe that the main exposure relates to the valuation of the organisation’s investment portfolio. At year-end the portfolio valuation was €12.35m. In the intervening months, turmoil in global markets has resulted in significant fluctuations in this valuation. As at 30 June 2020, the value of the portfolio was €12.09m. The Council considers the portfolio as a long term investment and expects the valuation to improve over time.

As it is the opinion of the Council members that the above events are non-adjusting events, the financial results of the organisation have not been adjusted for the impact these events have had on the organisation since the balance sheet date.

## 16. Approval of Financial Statements

The financial statements were approved by the Council on 13 July 2020 and signed on its behalf by

**Seán McMahon**  
Chairperson

**Tomás Ó Ruairc**  
Director

# Appendix 2

## Teaching Council members

The Teaching Council is made up of 37 voluntary members, as follows:

- 11 primary teachers (nine elected and two teacher union nominees)
- 11 post-primary teachers (seven elected and four teacher union nominees)
- two nominated by colleges of education
- two nominated by specified third-level bodies
- four nominated by school management (two primary and two-post primary)
- two nominated by parents' associations (one primary and one post-primary) and
- five nominated by the Minister for Education (including one representing each of IBEC and the ICTU).

The Council met on five occasions during the year and the attendance of each member is shown in the following table.

Ms Asiya Al-Tawash	5	Mr Gregor Kerr	5
Mr Geoffrey Browne	4	Mr Gerry Leydon	5
Ms Sinead Brett	3	Ms Máire Lineen	5
Ms Elizabeth Cooney	4	Mr Denis Magner	4
Ms Catherine Cross	1	Dr Anthony Malone	4
Mr Michael Delargey	5	Ms Claire Markey	5
Ms Karen Devine	2	Prof Marie McLoughlin	5
Mr Brendan Doody*	5	Mr Seán McMahon (Deputy Chairperson)	5
Ms Catherine Doolan	4	Ms Noelle Moran (Chairperson)	5
Mr Niall Duddy	5	Dr Melanie Ní Dhuinn	4
Ms Patricia Duffy	4	Mr Séamus Ó Fearraigh	5
Mr Peter Finnegan	3	Ms Deirdre O'Connor	5
Mr Pat Gilmore	3	Mr Séamus O'Connor	3
Ms Mairéad Glynn	0	Mr Seán O'Neill	4
Mr Colm Harte	4	Mr Gerry Quinn	3
Mr John Holian	3	Mr Eamonn Shaughnessy	4
Mr Ferdia Kelly	0	Ms Tracie Tobin	4
Ms Mary Kelly	4	Mr Frank Turpin	3



# Appendix 3

## Committees and Panels

The Teaching Council has established a number of committees and panels to facilitate its work.

### Executive Committee

The Executive Committee facilitates the efficient and effective functioning of the Council by conducting the business of the Council between general meetings.

The Committee, which consists of 11 members, met on nine occasions during the year. The attendances for these meetings are set out below.

Mr Geoffrey Browne	3
Mr Brendan Doody	6
Mr John Holian	7
Ms Mary Kelly	7
Ms Máire Lineen	7
Mr Seán McMahon	4
Ms Noelle Moran (Chairperson)	9
Ms Séamus Ó Fearraigh	6
Ms Deirdre O'Connor	8
Mr Gerry Quinn	5
Mr Frank Turpin	7

### Investigating Committee

Any person may make a complaint to the Investigating Committee in relation to a registered teacher. The Committee, which consists of 11 members, met on nine occasions during the year. The attendances for these meetings are set out below.

Ms Asiya Al-Tawash	5
Mr Geoffrey Browne	8
Mr Michael Delargey	6
Ms Karen Devine	5
Ms Catherine Doolan	6
Mr Niall Duddy	9
Ms Mairéad Glynn*	0
Mr John Holian	8
Mr Ferdia Kelly*	4
Mr Seán McMahon (Chairperson)	9
Mr Séamus Ó Fearraigh	9

\* Ms Mairéad Glynn and Mr Ferdia Kelly resigned from Council in December 2019.

## Disciplinary Committee

Complaints received by the Teaching Council in relation to registered teachers can ultimately result in an inquiry being conducted by a panel of the Disciplinary Committee into a teacher's fitness to teach.

The Investigating Committee of the Council may refer a complaint to the Disciplinary Committee for inquiry.

The Committee, which consists of 13 members, met on four occasions during the year. The attendances for these meetings are set out below.

Ms Elizabeth Cooney	3
Ms Catherine Cross*	1
Ms Patricia Duffy	0
Mr Pat Gilmore	3
Mr Colm Harte**	4
Mr Gerry Leydon	3
Ms Denis Magner (Chairperson)	4
Ms Claire Markey	4
Dr Melanie Ní Dhuinn	4
Mr Seán O'Neill	4
Mr Eamonn Shaughnessy	4
Ms Tracie Tobin	4
Mr Frank Turpin	3

\*Ms Catherine Cross was appointed to the Disciplinary Committee during the reporting year.

\*\*Mr Colm Harte was appointed to the Disciplinary Committee during the reporting year.

## Disciplinary Panel

In addition to attendance at scheduled Committee meetings, a number of Committee members attended at Fitness to Teach inquiries/hearings (17 days in total). The attendances for these meetings are set out below.

Ms Elizabeth Cooney	2
Ms Patricia Duffy	3
Mr Pat Gilmore	5
Mr Gerry Leydon	1
Mr Seán O'Neill	2
Ms Tracie Tobin	4

## Registration Committee

The Registration Committee advises the Council and makes recommendations in all areas relating to the registration of teachers.

The Committee, which consists of 13 members, met on six occasions during the year. The attendances for these meetings are set out below.

Ms Asiya Al-Tawash	6
Mr Brendan Doody	4
Mr Niall Duddy	6
Mr Pat Gilmore	5
Ms Mairéad Glynn*	0
Mr Colm Harte	6
Mr John Holian	6
Mr Gregor Kerr	4
Mr Gerry Leydon	4
Dr Anthony Malone	4
Prof Marie McLoughlin	1
Mr Séamus Ó Fearraigh	6
Mr Eamonn Shaughnessy	5

*\*Ms Mairéad Glynn resigned from Council in December 2019 and Mr Séamus Ó Fearraigh acted as Committee Chairperson.*

## Registration Review Group

The Registration Committee sits as the Registration Review Group in instances where teachers are unhappy with the outcome of a Panel's decision and request a review of the initial decision. The group met on five occasions during the year. Committee members who were involved in the panel decision or who have a conflict of interest withdraw from the meeting

Ms Asiya Al-Tawash	5
Mr Brendan Doody	4
Mr Niall Duddy (Acting Chairperson)	5
Mr Pat Gilmore	4
Ms Mairéad Glynn*	0
Mr Colm Harte	4
Mr John Holian	5
Mr Gregor Kerr	3
Mr Gerry Leydon	4
Dr Anthony Malone	2
Prof Marie McLoughlin	1
Mr Séamus Ó Fearraigh	3
Mr Eamonn Shaughnessy	5

*\*Ms Mairéad Glynn resigned from Council in December 2019 and Mr Niall Duddy acted as Committee Chairperson.*

## Registration Panel

The Registration Panel is responsible for the assessment of issues which relate to the registration of teachers such as granting of extensions to those holding conditional registration.

The Registration Panel, which consists of seven members, met on six occasions during the year. The attendances for these meetings are set out below.

Mr John Holian (Chairperson)	6
Ms Mary Kelly	1
Mr Gregor Kerr	6
Mr Gerry Leydon	6
Ms Máire Lineen	6
Ms Claire Markey	4
Dr Melanie Ní Dhuinn	6

## Education Committee

The Education Committee is responsible for making recommendations to the Council on policy relating to the continuum of teacher education.

The Committee, which consists of 13 members, met on six occasions during the year. The attendances for these meetings are set out below.

Ms Asiya Al-Tawash	4
Ms Elizabeth Cooney	5
Mr Michael Delargey	5
Ms Catherine Doolan	3
Ms Patricia Duffy	3
Mr Peter Finnegan	1
Mr Ferdia Kelly	1
Ms Mary Kelly	5
Ms Máire Lineen (Chairperson)	6
Mr Denis Magner	4
Ms Claire Markey	6
Dr Melanie Ní Dhuinn	6
Ms Tracie Tobin	5

## Finance Committee

The Finance Committee oversees the Council's financial affairs.

The Committee, which consists of seven members, met on six occasions during the year. The attendances for these meetings are set out below.

Mr Niall Duddy	6
Mr Pat Gilmore	6
Mr Denis Magner	5
Dr Anthony Malone	4
Mr Séamus O'Connor	3
Mr Gerry Quinn (Chairperson)*	3
Mr Frank Turpin	4

*\*Mr Gerry Quinn resigned as Chairperson towards the end of the reporting year.*

## Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee monitors the systems, financial controls and procedures of the Council to ensure that they operate in an orderly and efficient manner. The Committee, which consists of seven members, met on three occasions during the year. The attendances for these meetings are set out below.

Ms Sinead Brett	2
Ms Elizabeth Cooney (Chairperson)*	3
Mr Brendan Doody	3
Mr Séamus O'Connor	0
Mr Séamus Ó Fearraigh	3
Mr Liam Gallagher	2
Ms Breda Coss	3

\* Ms Elizabeth Cooney was appointed as Chairperson during the reporting year.

## Evidence of Character Panel

The Council's Evidence of Character Panel assesses the evidence of character of applicants seeking to register as teachers with the Council.

The Panel, which consists of seven members, met on 12 occasions during the year. The attendances for these meetings are set out below.

Mr Geoffrey Browne	8
Ms Sinead Brett	5
Ms Elizabeth Cooney*	4
Ms Patricia Duffy	3
Mr Colm Harte (Chairperson)	12
Mr Denis Magner	9
Mr Seán McMahon	11
Dr Melanie Ní Dhuinn	8

\* Ms Elizabeth Cooney temporarily replaced Ms Patricia Duffy on the Panel during the reporting year.

## Qualifications Panel

The Council's Qualifications Panel assesses the professional qualifications of applicants seeking to register as teachers.

The Panel, which consists of seven members, met on 11 occasions during the year. The attendances for these meetings are set out below.

Ms Karen Devine	2
Mr Ferdia Kelly*	3
Dr Anthony Malone	9
Prof Marie McLoughlin	4
Mr Séamus Ó Fearraigh	10
Mr Seán O'Neill (Chairperson)	9
Ms Tracie Tobin	11

\* Mr Ferdia Kelly resigned from Council in December 2019.

## Droichead Quality Assurance Process Group

The 2018-2019 Droichead Quality Assurance Panel met on two occasions during the reporting year.

Ms Elizabeth Cooney (post-primary)	0
Mr Séamus O'Connor (primary)	2
Ms Tracie Tobin (primary)	1

The 2019-2020 Droichead Quality Assurance Panel met once during the reporting year.

Mr Noelle Moran (post-primary)	1
Mr Séamus O'Connor (primary)	0
Mr Gerry Quinn (post-primary)	1
Mr Eamonn Shaughnessy (primary)	1

## Cosán Working Group

The Cosán Working Group met on two occasions during the year. The group comprised of practising teachers and relevant stakeholders tasked with promoting and co-ordinating the Cosán Development Process.

Ms Elizabeth Cooney	1
Ms Catherine Doolan	1
Ms Mairéad Glynn*	0
Mr Colm Harte	2
Ms Máire Lineen	2
Dr Anthony Malone	0
Ms Claire Markey	1
Mr Séamus O'Connor	1
Mr Seán O'Neill	2

\* Ms Mairéad Glynn resigned from Council in December 2019.

## FÉILTE Working Group

The FÉILTE Working Group met on five occasions during the year.\*

Mr Geoffrey Browne	1
Mr Niall Duddy	5
Mr Colm Harte	5
Mr Seán McMahon	5
Ms Noelle Moran	4
Mr Eamonn Shaughnessy	5
Ms Tracie Tobin	5

\*This group is comprised of external stakeholders and members of Council. Geoff Browne finished with the Working Group in 2019 as he was there in his capacity as President of the National Parents Council Post-Primary (NPC-PP).

## School Placement Working Group

The School Placement Working Group met on four occasions during the year.

Ms Mary Kelly	4
Ms Máire Lineen	4
Dr Anthony Malone	4
Ms Noelle Moran	4
Dr Melanie Ní Dhuinn	4

# Appendix 4

## Meeting Expenses – Financial Year 2019

1 January to 31 December

Member	Expenses Claimed	Meetings Attended
Ms Asiya Al-Tawash	€435	23
Ms Sinead Brett	€0	6
Mr Geoffrey Browne	€8,603	25
Ms Elizabeth Cooney	€3,580	23
Mr Michael Delargey	€6,181	12
Ms Karen Devine	€1,506	7
Mr Brendan Doody	€0	21
Ms Catherine Doolan	€6,538	14
Mr Niall Duddy	€9,738	38
Ms Patricia Duffy	€0	15
Mr Peter Finnegan	€0	5
Mr Liam Gallagher	€50	
Mr Pat Gilmore	€5,935	21
Ms Mairéad Glynn	€203	4
Mr Colm Harte	€5,612	41
Mr John Holian	€10,849	40
Mr Ferdia Kelly	€0	12
Ms Mary Kelly	€0	27
Mr Gregor Kerr	€574	20
Mr Gerry Leydon	€2,036	23
Ms Máire Lineen	€958	40
Mr Denis Magner	€3,034	26
Dr Anthony Malone	€0	31
Ms Claire Markey	€0	25
Prof Marie McLoughlin	€0	18
Mr Seán McMahon	€16,533	38
Ms Noelle Moran	€23,028	45*
Mr Séamus Mulconry	€0	2
Dr Melanie Ní Dhuinn	€769	36
Ms Deirdre O'Connor	€223	14
Mr Séamus O'Connor	€5,783	13
Mr Séamus Ó Fearraigh	€13,545	43
Mr Seán O'Neill	€684	25
Mr Gerry Quinn	€1,432	16
Mr Eamonn Shaughnessy	€8,820	23
Ms Tracie Tobin	€10,392	35
Mr Frank Turpin	€464	18

*\*The Council's Chairperson regularly attends meetings of other Council committees and working groups. The Chairperson was also involved in various other commitments and engagements on behalf of the Council during the 12-month reporting period.*



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Mhúinteoireachta**   
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